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THE PRAYER BOOK
REVISED

THE PRAYER BOOK REVISED

An Introduction to the Book referred to in
the Prayer Book Measure, and approved by the
Convocations on March 29, 1927, for submission
to the Church Assembly and to
Parliament

BY

FRANK THEODORE WOODS, D.D.
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TO ALL WHO
WOULD WORSHIP GOD IN SPIRIT
AND IN TRUTH

'Every scribe who has been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.'

(S. MATTHEW XIII. 52)

'I have never by any conscious act yielded my allegiance to any person or party in matters of religion . . . for the atmosphere of religious controversy and contradiction is as odious as the atmosphere of mental freedom is precious to me ; and I have feared to lose the one and be drawn into the other, by heat and bitterness creeping into the mind. If another chooses to call himself, or to call me, a member of this or that party, I am not to complain. But I respectfully claim the right not to call myself so, and on this claim I have, I believe, acted throughout my life, without a single exception ; and I feel that were I to waive it, I should at once put in hazard that allegiance to Truth which is at once the supreme duty and the supreme joy of life.'

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE

PREFACE

THIS book is not written by an expert, as perhaps will be sufficiently obvious. It is written by an average man for average men who, with no special knowledge of matters of worship except their own experience in church, desire to understand this fresh revision of the Prayer Book both in regard to the facts of the past and the needs of the present. I assume that each of my readers has by him a copy of the Revised Book, to which he can refer. If I have any qualifications besides my experience as a parish priest and as a bishop, apart from such study as I have been able to give to the subject, it is that in the course of years I have been led to look at these matters from different standpoints. I was born and bred in the strictest sect of a simple and spiritual Evangelicalism, for which, as exemplified more particularly in a father and mother of blessed memory, I shall thank God to my dying day. But since then, through reading and experience both of other men's view-points and of my own needs, I have realised that to lay the foundation is not sufficient, and that the God-given scaffolding of a spiritual life is the teaching, discipline, and above all the Sacraments of the

Divine Society in which pre-eminently the life-giving Spirit moves and works, and which—though it includes it—is so much greater than any national Church. If I may so put it, I have found that Evangelicalism and Anglo-Catholicism, in their true interpretation, are not incompatible but complementary.

My debt to existing books is as plain as it is extensive. More particularly I am grateful to Dr. Brightman of Magdalen College, Oxford, who, though he is not in general agreement with my point of view, has been kind enough to read through all the chapters except the first and the last, and has given me the benefit of his great liturgical knowledge in the suggestions and corrections which he was good enough to make. He is, of course, in no way responsible for any statement made or for any opinion expressed. More in accordance with my own attitude is that of my friend Canon Robinson of Winchester, who has been intimately connected with the process of the Revision since the beginning, and who allowed me to send him the proofs for his inspection.

My hope is that what I have written may be of some help both to the laity and (perhaps I may dare to hope) to some of the clergy too, in their study of this latest Revision both before and after it is adopted.

THEODORE WINTON.

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THE PRAYER BOOK REVISED

CHAPTER I

THE CHALLENGE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

There is a new spirit rising in men : we are at the dawning of a wider epoch.—BERNARD SHAW, *St. Joan*.

THERE are many indications that, in the providence of God, a great destiny is in store for the Anglican Communion. To look back over her long history is enough to convince us of this. In the days before the Conquest the Church was faced by the challenge of a land only half-evangelised, and at a time when she was only beginning to put her own house in order. Later, and in very turbulent times, she stood for freedom as against the arbitrary rule of lawless kings and self-seeking nobles, and led the way towards that constitutional government in which every citizen may have his rightful place. Later still, with the help of the friars, she made war on her own worldliness ; and in the sixteenth century she broke with Papal rule rather than forgo her right to reform herself in life and worship. Since then the world has moved

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very quickly, and she is now confronted with a situation whose demands are insistent and even menacing. These demands are the outcome of wholly new elements. The 'mechanical' shrinkage of the world and the jostling of its peoples ; the Great War ; the outlook of the post-war generation ; the discredit of philosophical and the increase of practical materialism ; the seeming failure of democracy ; the discoveries of science ; the advance of scholarship, Biblical and liturgical—these and other elements constitute a challenge to Christendom in which our Communion is deeply involved.

With all her faults, and they are not few, the Anglican Communion is meeting this challenge, and for this the nineteenth century seems to have been her providential preparation. At the beginning of that century her banks were narrow and her flow was torpid ; but almost immediately fresh streams of spiritual life began to pour into the ancient river, and they show no signs of slackening even to-day. On the side of personal religion the Evangelicals began the revival which later was taken up by the Catholics of the Oxford Movement. Then the pioneers of 'applied Christianity' joined in ; Maurice and Kingsley and, later on, Westcott and Barnett and Scott Holland, and a host of men like-minded. At the same time streams of scholarship—never wholly dried up—became deeper and swifter ; men of the Cam like Lightfoot and Hort, and men of the Isis like Driver and Sanday. The main flow of

her spiritual life the while, and the provision of her ministry, was watched and furthered by men expert in the things of God ; men like Vaughan and King and Moule and Body and Stanton. Nor was she lacking in laymen who gave of their best ; Prime Ministers of England like Gladstone¹ and Salisbury ; great lawyers like Hatherley and Cairns and Selborne ; as well as scores of clergy and laity who, themselves refreshed by the stream of her life, became fountains of living water to others.

Thus, as it seems to me, in the mercy of God this ancient Church has been prepared to meet the challenge of the twentieth century. What is that challenge ? It is the challenge of a world which needs the Gospel of Peace ; the challenge of a community whose life, social and industrial, needs Christianising ; the challenge of multitudes, men and women, boys and girls, all in search of life, to whom she may unveil ' the Life which is life indeed.' If she is to meet this challenge,

¹ In view of what has happened since his day it is perhaps worth while to recall Mr. Gladstone's words (in a letter to Bishop Wilberforce) in regard to the representation of the laity in the Councils of the Church and the need of a revival of the sense of responsibility in those who are nominally her members :

' No form of Church government that does not distinctly and fully provide for the expression of the voice of the laity either can be had, or, if it could, would satisfy the needs of the Church of England.'

He further stated that he would be content if at his death a beginning had been made ' towards raising the real character of membership in those millions upon millions . . . who now have its name and its name alone.'

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this Church of ours must have a new experience of God, and therefore a new power of prayer. But the indispensable preliminary to this is a deeper unity, and there are signs that this is coming. The challenge of the nations is compelling us to it. Before that challenge ecclesiastical differences pale into insignificance. Apart from 'comity' in the mission field, the Church has been learning, through Lambeth Conferences, Pan-Anglican Synods, and now through her own Missionary Council with its World Call, that the Body of Christ is itself the missionary society *par excellence*, and that in that endeavour we shall find a unity which, on narrower fields, we have sometimes sought in vain. The same is true of our organisation. In the National Mission of 1915-16 the Church at home was stirred to a new sense of corporate responsibility. Corporately the brotherhood 'repented'; corporately it 'hoped.' The result was the birth of a new temper and a new outlook which found expression in the Church Assembly and is fast finding further expression in the Parochial Church Councils throughout the country. For the first time in our long history it has become possible for the Church, through its representatives, to gather, to think, and to act together, in fact to realise vividly, as each session comes and goes, that we are a real comradeship; and that only as we progressively behave as such is there any hope of our meeting this challenge of the modern world. For it is not being met as it ought to be met. If the

test of a Church is the spiritual state of the nation, what are we to say? What of our own members, those at least who claim our membership on census papers and army forms, most of whom have been baptised, and many of whom have been confirmed, in the 'Beloved Community'? In the Great War it was revealed that for the larger part of our military manhood their Church membership counted for practically nothing. In the case of thousands, of course, their display of Christian qualities—courage, sacrifice, endurance—was superb, but their grip of the Faith was not such as to produce a sense of responsibility for the honour and welfare of the Church in ordinary life, or any perception of its Divine mandate for nations and men. Nor has the situation palpably changed. What proportion of the boys from our public schools, or girls from the schools which crowd our watering-places, show any more such grip of the Faith or perception of its implications? And in the activities of the people at large, while it is perfectly true that they have a high ideal of 'sportsmanship,' what signs are there in our social and industrial life of that sense of obligation which compels a man to prefer truth, justice, and fellowship to his own gain?

If the answers to these questions are not satisfactory, who but the Church is to blame? There are other symptoms that the challenge is not being met. But the conclusion of the whole matter is that we are driven to God, and this

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simply means that we must pray ; pray more simply ; pray more intelligently ; pray more unitedly. On this adventure we have started. The Jerusalem Chamber Conference, the increasing number of Retreats, the Schools of Prayer, all indicate that 'the Great Church is waking.'

But we are now called to go further, to make the whole *régime* of our corporate worship deeper, wider, more in accordance with all that we now know both of the Church's devotional experiences in all ages and in many countries and of the needs of these modern days. As everyone knows, the preparations were begun twenty years ago and more. A Royal Commission unanimously reported that 'the law of public worship in the Church of England is too narrow for the religious life of the present generation,' and recommended that 'Letters of Business should be issued to the Convocations with instructions to frame, with a view to their enactment by Parliament . . . such modifications in the existing law of Divine Service as may tend to secure the greater elasticity which a reasonable recognition of the comprehensiveness of the Church of England and of its present needs seems to demand.' Accordingly in 1906 the Crown, on the recommendation of the then Prime Minister, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, issued Letters of Business to the Convocations. Then ensued twenty years of labour,¹ only interrupted

¹ It will be seen in a subsequent chapter how this compares with the time occupied in previous revisions.

by the War (and then not entirely), in which some of the best liturgical scholars whom our Church has ever produced¹ gave themselves to the task of revision.

Half-way through this period the Church Assembly came into being. The proposals of the Convocations were carefully revised by a Committee appointed by the Assembly and subsequently embodied in a measure. The Revision² thus arrived at has been examined with the utmost care by the House of Clergy and the House of Laity. With the results of these examinations before them, and the suggestions from each House resulting therefrom, the bishops entered on their heavy and responsible task. This occupied them for six sessions, and I calculate that they sat in full house for 47 days, generally for six and sometimes for seven hours a day, not including the many further hours during which sub-committees went more meticulously into various points, legal and literary, as well as liturgical, nor the still further hours in which the 'members-in-charge'³ prepared the business for each day and investigated the very numerous problems submitted to them from time to time. In this work the House of Bishops was immensely assisted by the Oxford

¹ Of those who have passed into Paradise we remember with thankfulness Bishop Edgar Gibson of Gloucester, and Bishop F. H. Chase of Ely.

² Commonly known as N.A. 84.

³ The members-in-charge were the Bishops of Chichester (Dr. Burrows), Oxford (Dr. Strong), Chelmsford (Dr. Warman), Coventry (Dr. Carr), and Truro (Dr. Frere).

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University Press, through whose kindness each bishop was provided at the outset with a large volume¹ in which, with ample margins, the matter of N.A. 84 together with the suggestions and emendations of the Houses of Clergy and Laity were set out in parallel columns ; later on with a blue book² embodying the first results of our work ; later with a buff book embodying the further results, and later still with a yellow book embodying the final results together with other emendations and such alterations from the Houses of Convocation³ as were ultimately accepted by the bishops.

For the bishops who took part in the task the great drawing-room at Lambeth Palace will always be a sacred place, and the chapel still more so. For it was in that room, seated at long tables, that we held our discussions, recorded our votes, and made the decisions which will affect the life of the Church for generations to come. It was fortunate—I should rather say providential—that in the chair was one⁴ whose unique experience of public affairs, whose long tenure of his high office, and whose perfectly balanced mind, made an ideal chairman. Furthermore, he brought to the task an intimacy of knowledge, both of men and movements in the Anglican Communion, and a ripeness of judgment which gave that sure

¹ Known in our discussions as 'the Quarto.'

² Known as 'the Proof.'

³ To which the results of the bishops' work were submitted on February 7, 1927.

⁴ Randall Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury.

touch in his guidance of our discussions which is as rare as it is invaluable. And when you add the ability, the knowledge, legal and otherwise, the penetrating sagacity of his Grace of York, you realise something of what their leadership has meant for the Church at this time. Some bishops (as was natural and inevitable) took a larger part in the discussions than others. We had those who were peculiarly expert in theology, in liturgiology, in philosophy, in the history and use of our English tongue. Some were well acquainted with the problems of the Church in large towns, others were entirely familiar with the difficulties and opportunities of country parishes. I make bold to say that, even apart from their episcopal office, it would have been difficult to create a Council of Churchmen better equipped for their task from all those points of view, the careful consideration of which was vital to the result. At the outset some hoped that we should sit in public¹ and that our debates should have been regularly reported in the Press. I think that as our work proceeded we were almost without exception thankful that the decision had been otherwise. The kind of discussions in which we were engaged, some of them involving matters of keen controversy, the intimate exchange of thought and experience, the fact that points had to be considered which were of necessity unsuitable for public debate, and further, that we were there not as representatives responsible

¹ As on the first day of our proceedings.

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to constituents, but as responsible leaders—all these considerations made privacy imperative. But the perfection of that privacy was due to the gracious hospitality which has now come to be regarded as a precious asset of the Anglican Communion. If the Book opens the way to a new unity in the Church, it will be because it comes from an all-but completely united Episcopate.¹

§

The Book is now before the Church, and it is itself a challenge of the gravest import. That it is a challenge to pray goes without saying. If the Book does not enable the Church to pray better it has missed its aim and defeated its purpose. It is intended to inaugurate a new era in the art as well as the duty of corporate worship. It is a challenge to unity. I have tried to explain in a later chapter that the objective of the Book is not uniformity (which has definitely been the objective in all previous revisions), but unity in variety. When we rightly emphasise the variety, we must not forget to emphasise the unity.

¹ 'The bishops have given to their work unremitting devotion, and during many weeks there has rarely, among those in this country, been more than a single absentee. And never in my experience of conciliar work have I known long sittings and anxious discussions to be carried on with such absolute harmony and mutual confidence on the part of men of varied experience, varied sympathy, and here and there of varied opinions. It has been an object-lesson helpful to us all. It has been, I am persuaded, a direct answer to our prayers' (Extract from the Speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Convocations, February 7, 1927).

There are three schools in the Church (said the late Lord Salisbury) which I might designate by other names, but which I prefer to call the Sacramental, the Emotional, and the Philosophical. They are schools which, more or less, except when they have been crushed by the strong hand of power, have been found in the Church in every age. They arise not from any difference in the truth itself, but because the truth must necessarily assume different tints as it is refracted through the different *media* of different minds. But it is upon the frank and loyal tolerance of these schools that the existence of your Establishment depends.¹

In these days our prime purpose is not 'the existence of the Establishment,' however desirable that may be, but the spiritual efficiency of the Fellowship, and for that we want much more than 'frank and loyal tolerance of these schools' for each other, and by the Church at large, but a real understanding and a cordial co-operation. And this will mean sacrifice.

There are few enterprises which call for more candour and more self-sacrifice than the enterprise of jettisoning a controversial cargo when, owing to new knowledge or longer experience, its value has departed. Societies which were founded on the assumption of its value are faced with the choice between extinction and the continuation of a propaganda which is seen to have lost its point. Individuals are confronted with the choice of maintaining an intellectual obstinacy or confessing that they have changed their minds—a

¹ *Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury*, vol. ii. 57, 58.

confession which, not unnaturally, to some persons, and especially in matters of religion, is intolerable. For the societies and persons in question render themselves liable to charges of disloyalty, and in any case their position is not enviable. Yet there come moments in the life of any society, and especially in the life of the Church, when that enterprise must be taken in hand, with all the discomfort and misunderstanding which it involves. Such a moment is this. The Revision of the Prayer Book is a call for the re-valuation of our controversial assets, a call to determine which of them is really essential, and which has had its day. For we are compelled to face the fact that there are controversies in which our fathers engaged as involving the very vitals of the Church, but which are now seen to be dead or dying. A good example is the controversy about the Athanasian Creed,¹ which shook the Church almost to its foundations in the 'sixties, but whose thunder is now very distant indeed. Another is the 'vestiarian' controversy, as it is called. The fact that this particular controversy is moribund is sufficiently indicated by the fact that whereas twenty-five years ago, to say nothing of fifty, any proposal to recognise the legality of the eucharistic vestments would have led to a long and possibly acrimonious discussion in the House of Bishops, the proposal was passed this year almost without debate. The time is well within living memory when good men shook their

¹ See p. 61.

heads with horror at a surplice in the pulpit, a cassock in the chancel, a coloured stole, a candle, the smell of incense, an eastward position during the Creed or at the altar, whereas the 'weightier matters of the law'—such as the application of Christ's way of life to our modern problems—went unheeded.

It is time for us to revise our estimates, and in particular to withdraw these and other details of ceremonial from the sphere of party controversy, so that they may be judged *on their merits*. There is nothing in them peculiarly Anglican or peculiarly Roman. The Lutheran Church in Sweden, whose doctrinal position is definitely Evangelical, uses vestments.¹ The Orthodox Eastern Church uses incense. The only official interpretation that has ever been given to the 'Eucharistic vestments' is that each garment is symbolic of some Christian virtue—humility, chastity, etc.—which ought to find a signal exhibition in the priest. Whatever people may say, no question of 'high' or 'low' church is involved. Allegations of 'Roman' or 'anti-Roman' are irrelevant.² The controversy with Rome is far different and goes far deeper than these comparatively

¹ Its bishops are invested, at their consecration, with cope, mitre, and pastoral staff.

² The controversialist sees in the vestments the 'red rag,' but the ordinary man regards special garments for the highest act of worship as obviously reasonable. A bishop of my acquaintance was requested by the authorities of a battleship, on which he was to confirm, to present himself in 'No. 1 rig,' which meant cope, mitre, and staff. They were ignorant of controversy, but alive to the importance of 'full dress' for a solemn occasion.

unimportant issues. The whole question of ceremonial, with all its details, must be judged on principles, not of party, but of art, of æsthetics, of psychology, and most of all of spiritual helpfulness, and the verdict resulting from these last will be as various as men's temperaments, upbringing, culture, and general turn of mind.¹ The fact is that in our controversies, ecclesiastical as well as industrial, we have suffered too much from the 'fear complex.' Approval or disapproval is accorded not on the merits of the doctrine or method, but on what it *may* involve, what it *may* lead to, the interpretation that *may* be given to it, and such like considerations. The wedge whose 'thin end' is discerned by a certain type of mind in every new proposal ought to be broken and banished.

This revision opens the door to a new era of that frankness and candour which has been difficult in a Church which is regulated by sixteenth-century rules and regulations. Bishops have been accused (quite justly) of 'winking' at methods and practices which are not permitted by the strict letter of the law. Clergymen who have been allowed an inch have been accused (equally justly) of taking an ell; of doing things which, they have hoped, would go unnoticed by the bishop; of being careful *not* to ask the

¹ A real need of the Church is some kind of 'council of rites' which would impartially examine and wisely direct in all matters of ceremonial and ritual. At present the tyranny of fashion, and indeed of ignorance, in these matters, is far too strong.

bishop's permission in cases where it was in doubt. But if the army was managed on sixteenth-century regulations there would of necessity be a considerable amount of 'winking' on the part of the generals, a considerable amount of irregular practice on the part of colonels and captains, and if the Army Council set themselves to construct a more up-to-date *régime* they would win the applause, rather than the criticism, of all right-thinking citizens.¹

This revision, alike of prayers and of regulations, makes possible a situation hitherto almost undreamt of whereby all the groups in the Church will know that the practices and methods of other groups, with which perhaps they have little sympathy, or of which it may be they disapprove, are not done in hole-and-corner fashion behind the bishop's back, but are *part of the definitely authorised régime of the Society*, a *régime* only determined upon after twenty years of prayer, thought, and deliberation in our constituted councils. The Anglo-Catholic may disapprove of the relaxation in regard to the Athanasian Creed, but at least he will know that it is not a fad of his modernist friend and a

¹ Cf. Froude in his *Plea for the Free Discussion of Theological Difficulties*: 'If medicine had been regulated three hundred years ago by Act of Parliament; if there had been Thirty-nine Articles of Physic, and every licensed practitioner had been compelled under pains and penalties to compound his drugs by the prescriptions of Henry the Eighth's physician, Dr. Butts, it is easy to conjecture in what state of health the people of this country would at present be found.'

defiance of the rubric, but in accordance with the deliberate permission of the Body. The Evangelical is distressed by the fact that, in the Anglo-Catholic church near by, permanent Reservation is practised without the knowledge of the bishop, or the sanction of the law ; but he will look upon the practice in a very different light when he knows that, acting under the rubric in the Prayer Book, the bishop has carefully considered the circumstances of the case, and as a result has issued his formal licence. Thus each group is asked to approve a book and a system in which some things are authorised to which it objects ; or forbidden, which it desires, and to make the sacrifice which this involves. If the corporate life of the Church and its own self-respect is of any value, that sacrifice is worth making. The gain to its spiritual strength and its moral influence in the nation¹ will be simply incalculable if it is known that now at last the *régime* of the whole Society, parishes and dioceses, is to be honest and open, with loyalty freely given and authority gladly obeyed. I admit that for some in the various schools of thought the price will not be small. Some Anglo-Catholics have come to regard 'Devotions' before the blessed Sacrament as almost a *sine quâ non* of the spiritual life. I have explained elsewhere in this book why I believe they are wrong. Some Evangel-

¹ I am perforce now thinking primarily of England, since the revision will have no authority (unless, *e.g.* the Churches of Wales or of the United States voluntarily accept it) outside our borders.

icals feel that to give their approval to the alternative Canon or to Reservation in any form is putting a very severe strain on their allegiance. They say with entire reasonableness that the men of the opposite school have advanced step by step, with or without authority, and sometimes without that brotherly consideration for Evangelical convictions which they had every right to expect. I do not think that these remarks apply to the majority of the men in either school of thought, but even minorities are entitled to tender sympathy and consideration, and most of all in the Community of Christ. None the less, to my mind, the price of a loyal acceptance of the Book would be worth paying ten times over in view of the vista which is thereby opened of a new confidence, a new co-operation, and most of all such a freedom from the old furtive atmosphere of uncertainty and suspicion as would enable the whole Society to give its whole mind to its God-given mandate of proclaiming Christ's message and extending Christ's Kingdom.

And herein lies the answer to those who ask whether the regulations of the new Book will be obeyed, and if not, what disciplinary measures the bishops propose to take. Apart from the folly of prescribing beforehand a course for circumstances which may never arise, I submit that in the Book there lies the plan, and the only possible plan, on which such a reconciliation can be effected. It provides the framework of a new unity. And every party in the Church must face

the challenge. A few there are, or will be, who will decline to respond. But the man who thus declines, after the Book has received its full and canonical endorsement, and has been commended to his diocese by the bishop in Synod, will show himself unable to appreciate the common decencies of corporate life, still less the meaning of Catholic authority.

That there is a legal side to the whole transaction is obvious, but to my mind the supreme incentive to obedience will not be, and ought not to be, a threat of penalties, but the moral response of the sons of the Church, not merely to their fathers-in-God, but to the consensus of the Society constitutionally reached. The history of the Church of England in the nineteenth century is in large measure a dismal tale of prosecutions, decisions of courts, sacred and secular, convictions, and even imprisonments. And this, in the main, because they were working under a system centuries old ; in which, inevitably, the necessary elasticity was impossible. With us the situation is utterly different. Ours is the chance not of a lifetime, nor even of a century, but of an era. It is within our power to make an epoch in the history of our Church, for, I repeat, the Book challenges the Church to a great reconciliation. In her response lies the secret of her future.

CHAPTER II

FORMER REVISIONS OF THE BOOK

Change, the strongest son of Life.—GEORGE MEREDITH.

THERE are four Prayer Books in use in the Anglican Communion. There is the Prayer Book with which we are familiar. There is the Scottish Book, that is, our Book together with the Scottish Liturgy, and the 'permissive additions to and deviations from the service books of the Scottish Church.' There is the American Prayer Book, that is, 'the Book of Common Prayer . . . of the Church according to the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.' And there is the Prayer Book according to the use of the Province of South Africa.¹ All these are lineal descendants of the first English Prayer Book of 1549 which appeared under the aegis of Edward VI and was probably to a large extent the work of Archbishop Cranmer. No other revision of the Prayer Book² can compare in importance with this one, unless it be the revision of 1927. For in its purification of doctrine, in its simplification of the services, above all in its use of the English tongue, it was and is the *fons et origo* of all subsequent versions of the Book.

¹ Its distinctive features are the Communion Office and the Occasional Offices.

² If so radical a process can be called revision.

Before inspecting the different stages of the building, it is well to examine the foundation, and particularly so at the moment when a further stage is being prepared for. I venture therefore to remind my readers of the circumstances of the 1549 production and the principles underlying it. To suppose that the Reformation, and with it the first English Prayer Book, was the result, in the first instance, of the love affairs or the patriotic nationalism of Henry VIII, is to mistake the occasion for the cause. King Henry's behaviour is open to grave criticism, but it throws some light on the age in which he lived, and the age in which the English Reformation was born, when we remember that he was 'intellectually and morally superior to most of the Princes and all the Popes of his unhappy time.'¹ The movements which brought into being the first English Prayer Book lay far deeper and were far more widespread. It was the age of the discovery of America. The curtain had risen on a new world. At the same time a new enthusiasm for the old world, and particularly for its learning, was bursting, like buds in spring, all over Europe. Men were beginning to think anew, and to think for themselves. Civilisation was being born again. In religion there was a grave and a growing dissatisfaction with the gross worldliness of the Church. Her colossal system, so ideal in its intention, often so worldly and even commercial in its methods, was not 'delivering the goods' of the

¹ T. A. Lacey, *The Anglo-Catholic Faith*, p. 19.

Gospel to a hungry world. The new wine had not failed, but the old bottles were wholly insufficient. It is true, of course, that, in England as elsewhere, the whole process was entangled in politics. Few of the figures that pass across the political stage during the period between 1530 and 1662, and who so deeply influenced the course of English religion, were men of piety, really anxious for the spiritual welfare of the Church—I am thinking of Henry, Thomas Cromwell, Somerset, Northumberland, and we must add Elizabeth and James and Charles II too. Charles I and Laud were thus anxious, but the one combined his anxiety with a curious lack of honesty, and the other with methods eminently calculated to defeat their own object.

On a broad view, and leaving on one side fanatics like Queen Mary and John Knox, it is amazing that such valuable results for religion should have come from hands so tainted and hearts so worldly. Apart from Charles I and Laud, the men who really cared were men like Sir Thomas More and Bishop Gardiner on the Conservative side ; Bishops Ridley and Latimer on the side of the Reformers ; later, Lancelot Andrewes and John Cosin ; and above all the meek and learned Cranmer.

It is time to ask what were the principles which guided those who gave the English Church the first Prayer Book in its own tongue.¹ First

¹ It must not be forgotten that the Litany had been published, in English, in 1544.

there was the determination that it should be intelligible. The bishops and divines who went into Conference at Chertsey in 1548, some favouring the old Prayer Book and some the new (as we should say in 1927), were agreed 'without controversy,' as Cranmer says in a subsequent letter to Queen Mary, 'that the service of the Church ought to be in the mother tongue.' The first step in this direction had already been taken, for it had been ordered by the House of Bishops in Convocation that 'on every Sunday and Holy Day . . . the curate of every Parish Church, after the *Te Deum* and *Magnificat*, should openly read unto the people one chapter of the New Testament in English without exposition; and when the New Testament was read over, then to begin the Old.'¹ This enactment had only been made possible by the translation of the Bible into English, which had itself contributed in large measure to the Reformation movement.

Intimately bound up with this principle was the desire for the simplification of the services. The elaboration of the mechanism of worship (if the phrase be allowed) in the Middle Ages was excessive. Many books were required, but by the beginning of the sixteenth century these were reduced to four—the Missal, containing the service for the Mass for the whole year; the Breviary (the 'Abridgement'), containing the whole choir office of the year; the Manual (the

¹ Procter and Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 31.

‘Hand-book’), containing the Occasional Offices (Baptism, Matrimony, Burial, etc.) ; and the Pontifical, containing those offices which are peculiar to the Bishop.

Considering the number of those services (the Breviary contained a separate service for each of the ‘Hours’) and the fact that they were all in Latin, we can appreciate the revolutionary character of the proposal to throw them all, or such parts of them as were suitable, into one book, and to substitute English for Latin throughout. Not least of the principles on which the book was founded was the desire to brush aside mediaeval accretions in the service and to go back to primitive models of worship in the New Testament and in the Fathers of the Church. But the simplest way of appreciating all these principles in the minds of the Reformers is to read their own words—probably Cranmer’s own words¹—in the Preface to the Book :

There was neuer any thing by the wit of man so well deuised, or so surely established, which (in continuāce of time) hath not been corrupted: as (emong other thinges) it may plainly appere by the common prayers in the Church, commonlye called diuine seruice: the firste originall and grounde whereof, if a manne woulde searche out by the auncient fathers, he shall finde that the same was not ordeyned, but of a good purpose, and for a great aduancement of godliness: For they so ordred the matter, that all the whole Bible (or the greatest parte thereof)

¹ Adapted in the main from the Preface to the *Breviarium Romanum* of 1535.

should be read ouer once in the yeare, intendencyng thereby, that the Cleargie, and specially suche as were Ministers of the congregacion, should (by often readyng and meditacion of Gods worde) be stirred vp to godlines themselves, and be more able also to exhorte other by wholsome doctrine, and to confute them that were aduersaries to the trueth. And further, that the people (by daily hearyng of holy scripture read in the Church) should continuallye profite more and more in the knowledge of God, and bee the more inflamed with the loue of his true religion. But these many yeares passed this Godly and decent ordre of the auncient fathers, hath beē so altered, broken, and neglected. . . .

And moreouer, whereas S. Paule would haue suche language spoken to the people in the church, as they mighte vnderstande and haue profite by hearyng the same: the seruice in this Church of England (these many yeares) hath been read in Latin to the people, whiche they vnderstoode not, so that they haue heard with theyr eares onely: and their hartes, spirite and minde, haue not been edified thereby. . . .

Moreouer, the nōbre and hardnes of the rules called the pie, and the manifold chaunginges of the seruice, was the cause, y^t to turne the boke onely, was so hard and intricate a matter, that many times, there was more busines to fynd out what should be read, then to read it when it was founde out. . . .

So y^t here you haue an ordre for praier (as touchyng the readyng of holy scripture) muche agreable to the mynde and purpose of the olde fathers, and a greate deale more profitable and commodious, then that whiche of late was vsed.

Such were the thoughts and intentions of Cranmer and his fellow-workers, intentions still more explicit in the statement 'Of Ceremonies' placed

at the end of the Book, of which it must suffice to quote the following sentences :

Of suche Ceremonies as be vsed in the Church, and haue had their beginning by thinstitution of man: Some at the first were of godly intent and purpose deuised, and yet at length turned to vanitie and supersticiō: Some entred into the Church by vndiscrete deuocion, and suche a zeale as was without knowlage, and forbecause they were winked at in the beginning, they grewe dayly to more and more abuses, which not onely for their vnprofitablenesse, but also because they haue muche blynded the people, and obscured the glory of God, are worthy to be cut awaye, and cleane reiected. Other there be, which although they haue been deuised by mā: yet it is thought good to reserue thē still, aswell for a decent ordre in the Church (for the which they were first deuised) as because they pertayne to edificacion: Whervnto all thynges doen in the Church (as the Apostle teacheth) ought to be referred. And although the keping or omytting of a ceremonie (in it selfe considered) is but a small thyng: Yet the wilfull and contemptuous trangression, and breakyng of a common ordre, and disciplyne, is no small offence before God. Let all thynges bee done emong you (sayeth Sainte Paule) in a semely and due ordre. The appoyntmente of the whiche ordre, pertayneth not to pryuate menne: Therefore no manne ought to take in hande nor presume to appoynte or alter any publyke or common ordre in Christes Church, excepte he be lawfully called and autorized thereunto. And whereas in this our tyme, the myndes of menne bee so diuerse, that some thynke it a greate matter of conscience to departe from a peece of the leaste of theyre Ceremonies (they bee so addicted to their old customes) and agayne on the other syde, some bee so newe fangle that they woulde innouate all thyng,

and so doe despyse the olde that nothyng canne lyke them, but that is newe ; It was thought expediente not so muche to haue respecte howe to please and satisfie eyther of these partyes, as howe to please God, and profite them bothe.

The impression left by these words of our forefathers is one of robust common sense combined with a deep reverence for the past and an anxiety to promote a heartfelt and intelligent devotion in the future. Cranmer had no desire to break with the past, and in the structure of and wording of its Offices his book adheres in the main to the Western tradition. Some of its liturgical sources were connected with the names of Gelasius and Gregory, who were both of them successively popes, the one at the end of the fifth, the other at the end of the sixth century. The material from these sources, and much more, came straight from the 'Sarum Use.' But other elements have left some impression, as, for instance, the Eastern Orthodox and Mozarabic Rites ; the Breviary of Cardinal Quiñones (who, commissioned by the Pope in 1529 to make a reformed Service Book, carried out his task with such thoroughness, that it was vehemently assailed) ; the liturgical enactments of a Council summoned by Hermann von Wied, Archbishop of Cologne, a man deeply concerned with the abuses in the Church, which he describes as 'tossed among the billows, while the Captain seems to be asleep within it'¹ ; and also certain Lutheran Orders of Service, some of which were more conservative than others.

¹ Brightman, *The English Rite*, vol. i., p. xxviii.

The fact that this revision of the Prayer Book was followed within three years by one which was much more drastic has blinded many people to the fact that from the point of view of spirituality, intelligibility, and simplicity, and therefore of true religion, the Prayer Book of 1549 was itself an immense advance on anything known before in England, and constitutes, as I have already said, the vital moment in the long history of our liturgical reform. From that moment the Church of England was reformed as well as Catholic; from that moment she definitely accepted as her standards the pure doctrine of the New Testament and the ideals of the primitive Church. Development she does not deny—she disparages no doctrine or practice of the other great branch of the Western Church merely because it is Roman or modern. She only asks, Is it true? and she believes that the answer to that question may best be found in the light of these standards.

Picture to yourself if you can a Churchman of 1550. He has every right to be bewildered. Tremendous changes have come with lightning speed. The Papal allegiance has been repudiated, and, though there had always been an incipient nationalism¹ in the English Church, that allegiance had grown into the Churchman's very bones. Henry, it is true, had never thrown over Catholicism. He had merely substituted the Royal for the Roman variety. He was content to 'defend the Faith' and to be a Server at Mass

¹ The phrase is Canon Lacey's.

to the end. Nor did the people at large desire much change. It was more the practical abuses than the doctrinal errors in the Church that provided the impetus for reformation, and this was, of course, powerfully reinforced by the growing nationalism in nearly all the greater States of Europe. But the Churchman of 1550, through whose eyes we are trying to look, may well have felt anxious as to the changes in his parish church. 'We will not receive the new Service, because it is like a Christmas game ; but we will hear our old services of Mattins, Mass, Evensong, and Procession in Latin, not in English.' So cried the conservative agitators in the West Country, whose movement assumed far more serious proportions than our modern Protestant Parsons' Pilgrimage, though their cry too, and that of their sympathisers, is for 'No change.' Much of the ritual to which he is accustomed has gone. No longer can favourite saints be invoked, for all such invocation has disappeared from the Book. In the Mass the service has been re-arranged and simplified, as well as said in the mother tongue. There is no 'Elevation,' and the people are now explicitly and solemnly invited to communicate (and in both kinds) after a new and evangelical preparation of confession and absolution, followed by the 'Comfortable Words.'¹ Further, there is to be at least one sermon a quarter in every parish church, an injunction whose implications

¹ He will have been already accustomed to all of this occasionally in the 'Order of Communion of 1548.'

as to the preaching capacities of the clergy are more obvious than pleasant. Our friend will be alarmed at all this, but if he is the sensible man we take him for he will be secretly if not openly thankful, and will realise that innovations are sometimes improvements, especially when they conduce to a deeper devotion, a worship more real, more thoughtful, and therefore more conducive to a holy life.

The motive alleged for such changes as the abolition of processions, and the reading of the Gospel and Epistle and the saying of the Litany in English, in the 'Injunctions' of the year before, sheds a flood of light on the purpose¹ of Cranmer and his fellow-workers in the revision. It is interesting, in view of our present revision, to note the speed at which the new Prayer Book was produced. And that remark applies to every revision save that of 1927. It is true, of course, that Church and State were far more closely united in those days, and that, when necessary, the machinery of both worked much faster. The Sovereign himself, for instance, could and did intervene in a way which abbreviated much argument and accelerated many conclusions. The flow of opinion, urged now as an excuse for inaction, is stagnant and stationary compared with what it was in the sixteenth century. Within a space of twenty years—the time occupied by

¹ A. E. Pollard, *Thomas Cranmer*, p. 196: '(It is) to avoid all contention and strife . . . by reason of fond courtesy and challenging of place in procession, and also that they may the more quietly hear what is said or sung to their edifying.'

our revision—the majority of English Churchmen had been content to use a Latin Mass in 1548 (with English devotions inserted), an English Communion in 1549, a Communion much more radically reformed in 1552, the unadulterated Latin Mass in 1553,¹ and the Elizabethan compromise in 1559 ; a display of liturgical gymnastics which, considering that Catholic faith and order was never lost, is probably unparalleled in any Church in Christendom. Nor were there wanting then, as now, those who preferred a private revision of their own to anything that was authorised by the Church. Official warnings were issued in 1548 to those who were prone to run ahead too fast ‘not to bring in new and strange orders every one in their Church according to their fantasies.’² Indeed, in the Act of Uniformity of 1549 it is admitted that the authorities had ‘ essayed to stay innovations or new rites,’ but had not ‘ had such good success as might have been desired.’³ The fact is that when Englishmen think they see ways of improving the worship of the Church, whether in the sixteenth century or the twentieth, they are apt to be impatient, and to take matters into their own hands. But the process of revision in 1548–9 was extraordinarily speedy if judged by modern experience.

¹ It is probable that partly as a reaction from the exaggerated reformation of the Book in 1552 there were multitudes of Churchmen who were content to go back to the old order.

² Procter and Frere, p. 39.

³ Gee and Hardy, *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, p. 358.

Apparently no authoritative steps were taken before the issue of the Order of Communion in 1548, and the preparation of this document is veiled in obscurity. There was a Conference of Divines at Chertsey and at Windsor in September of that year for the settlement of liturgical questions and 'a uniform order of prayer.'¹ By December 15 the work, it appears, was finished, that is, in four months from the beginning of the Conference, for on that day there began a three days' debate in the House of Lords, in which it transpired that the bishops had been consulted and had subscribed to the book with one dissentient.² Several of the Anglo-Catholics consented 'for the sake of unitie at home in this Realme,' though Gardiner of Winchester afterwards opined that 'there was never more spoken for the Sacrament than in that book.'³ The episcopal discussion seems to have been sharp,⁴ and the Archbishop of Canterbury maintained the need for revision 'apertissime, constantissime doctissimeque'⁵ with much frankness, firmness, and learning. The book was Cranmer's work, but it was subjected to considerable criticism in both Houses of Parliament before it was finally accepted as a reasonable compromise between the old and the new. Who accepted it? A majority of the

¹ Procter and Frere, p. 45.

² Day of Chichester.

³ Procter and Frere, p. 49.

⁴ 'Decertatum est acriter inter episcopos.'

⁵ Procter and Frere, p. 49.

bishops,¹ for the original all-but-unanimity had sadly dwindled in the course of debate. It was also accepted by Convocation. This has been questioned, but in a letter to Bonner that year the King asserts that 'the Book is set forth not only by the common agreement and full assent of the nobility and commons of the late session of the late Parliament but also by the like assent of the bishops in the same Parliament and of all other the learned men of this realm in their synods and convocations provincial.'² Though the records of Convocation perished in the Fire of London that statement seems conclusive. And it was accepted by Parliament.

§

I have dwelt on this our first revision of the Prayer Book at a greater length than is warranted by the size of this book because it holds a unique relationship to our present revision. This Prayer Book of 1549 is the book upon which every revision has been based, and is therefore essentially at the back of the present revision. As a revision it was conservative, reasonable, and compatible with those standards of the English Church—loyalty to the New Testament and to the primitive Church—which then for the first time emerged into the open. It tended to more spiritual worship, and it is not surprising to find that the Act of Uniformity which ordered the book which

¹ Ten for, eight against, or, including proxies, twelve for, nine against, and one neutral.

² Procter and Frere, p. 50.

supplanted it asserts that it 'contained nothing but what was agreeable to the word of God and the Primitive Church' and that doubts which had been raised regarding its contents and use proceeded rather from 'the curiosity of the minister and mistakers, than of any other worthy cause.'¹

Although it is certain that the compilers of the Second Revision intended no sinister reflection on the first, the new Prayer Book of 1552 was a very different production. Broadly speaking, it represents Cranmer, not in his best and most mature thinking, as counselled by foreign reformers² who did not understand our English genius for that wise comprehension which includes 'treasures new and old' in true proportion. 'The majority of Englishmen,' as Mr. Pollard says,³ 'probably had no desire for doctrinal change,' but the forces of reform were vast and vehement, and were inspired, not so much by theological considerations as by the desperate state of the Church.⁴ Then, too, the appetite of the laity for ecclesiastical spoils had been whetted.

¹ Procter and Frere, p. 81.

² Yet the changes in the Holy Communion went further than the chief of these foreigners—Bucer—approved.

³ A. F. Pollard, *Thomas Cranmer*, p. 188.

⁴ See the Visitation of the Diocese of Gloucester in 1551. 'Three hundred and eleven clergy were then examined; one hundred and seventy-one could not repeat the Ten Commandments in English, ten could not say the Lord's Prayer, twenty-seven could not tell who was its author, and thirty could not tell where it was to be found; sixty-two incumbents were absent, and most of them were pluralists who did not reside in the diocese' (A. F. Pollard, *Thomas Cranmer*, pp. 188, 189).

Finally, the supporters of reform were becoming increasingly tools in the hand of 'one of the ablest and most unprincipled party leaders who have ever turned to their own advantage the resources and wealth of their country.'¹ Not that the Book of 1552 was without its points. The well-known introduction to Morning and Evening Prayer—Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution—was inserted. In the Communion Office the Decalogue was prefixed, and the long Prayer of Consecration was recast, and divided into the three parts—Prayer for the Church Militant, Canon, and Prayer of Oblation—with which we are familiar. Other alterations were made calculated to emphasise the Protestant character of the Book, but it was too palpably the production of the more extreme Reformers aided by the threats of the secular power; and the alacrity with which the people reverted to the old order in the early months of Mary's reign shows that the Book in no sense represented the prevailing sentiments of either Church or nation. The records of Convocation in regard to the Book are dubious. There seems to have been no proper discussion of the Book as a whole; indeed the Prolocutor of the Lower House in 1553 expressly congratulated the House on the fact that it had never sanctioned it.² But it was enforced by Parliament in an Act which, as we have seen, recognised the worth

¹ A. F. Pollard, *Thomas Cranmer*, p. 252. The Earl of Warwick, better known by his later title of Duke of Northumberland.

² Procter and Frere, p. 80.

of the first Revision¹ and describes this second Revision as a 'more plain and manifest explanation' of the said Order 'where it is necessary to make the same prayers and fashion of service more earnest and fit to stir Christian people to the true honouring of Almighty God.'²

§

The third revision of the Prayer Book was undertaken ten years after the first, years which were among the most eventful ten years in English Church history. One of the saddest reflections as we survey that long history—the same is true of all history—is the difference which would have been made in the whole temper and outlook of our people to their religion—if Queen Mary had been a woman of tact and sense ; if Archbishop Laud had used methods of conciliation both in Scotland and in England ; if the bishops at the end of the eighteenth century had been alert and alive to the movements of the Spirit in their day. Yet it may be that, as with individuals, we of this Mother Church had lessons to learn which, if the path had been simpler and easier, we should have missed. Certain it is that if Mary had had the political sagacity (to put it no higher) of Elizabeth ; if, for example, she had been content to revive the Book of 1549 with no further dealings with the Papacy, the English nation might have been led along a path of sane

¹ See above, p. 33.

² Gee and Hardy, p. 371.

and reasonable Catholicism which would have avoided many subsequent pitfalls of bitter controversy. Instead of this a course was adopted which immeasurably deepened the cleavage between conservatives and reformers ; a course which led directly to that identification of Romanism with disloyalty—real or suspected—to the English State which poisoned politics for generations, and whose effects have not even yet disappeared ; and which thereby retarded for years the recovery of anything more than the framework of Catholicism within the Church. No policy ever more completely defeated its own object than the policy of Mary. The first result of it, so far as the revision of the Prayer Book was concerned, was to throw the leaders of the reforming party into the arms of their foreign sympathisers in Geneva, Zurich, Strasburg, Frankfurt, and elsewhere, whither many of them had fled when the storm broke, and to send them back on Elizabeth's accession stiffened in their opposition to moderate counsels and soured in their whole attitude to the Church of their fathers. From that time forward the Puritans (as they were afterwards called) were a continual thorn in the side of the Church. They had many virtues. They emphasised the infinite value of each human soul. This led directly to the sense of civic responsibility. The whole foundation of democracy is therefore immensely indebted to them. Broadly speaking, however, they had little sense of the corporate life of the Church, little or no

appreciation of art—by the Restoration church music was all but dead—and, worst of all perhaps, no sense of humour.¹ They shared to the full the intolerance of the times, and they were, and are, largely responsible for the impression ingrained at least till very recent times in every Englishman, that the important thing in Church affairs is the presence or absence of ritual, and that ceremonial and spirituality, though they may be on speaking terms, can never be really congenial.

Elizabeth's task was to effect some kind of reconciliation between these stiff-necked stalwarts and those who were addicted to the old ways, or at least to provide some framework of worship which would include them both. This she did, almost by sheer force of will, though not without the help of wise councillors like Cecil. The very ceremonies of her coronation were a signal of her desire for compromise. The Mass was celebrated in Latin, but the Epistle and Gospel were read in English ; the Dean of the Chapel Royal officiated, as he was willing to celebrate without elevating the Host. The difficulties of the revision were great. Convocation was opposed to any change, and the revision therefore never received its sanction. Nor apparently was any formal commission issued by the Queen. Ultimately, however, a scheme based on the Revision of 1552 was laid before Parliament and accepted, though in the House of Lords, owing to considerable episcopal opposition, it only passed

¹ There were famous exceptions to this, like John Bunyan.

by a majority of three.¹ The variations from the last revision were not very numerous, but they were all designed to help the Church to regain her Catholic balance, a balance which, as we have seen, had been seriously upset in 1552. Morning and Evening Prayer was to be said 'in the accustomed place' in the church or chancel instead of 'in such place as the people may best hear.' The limitation of vestments to the surplice or rochet was withdrawn, and an authorisation given for the use of 'such ornaments . . . as were in use . . . in the second year of the reign of Edward VI.' In the Communion Service the Words of Delivery of the two earlier revisions were combined: 'The Body of our Lord . . . Take and eat this . . .,' whereas in the last revision the first and vital part had been omitted. The Declaration touching kneeling at the Communion was omitted. There was strong opposition on the part of many bishops and leading clergy; yet the settlement was in the end widely accepted. It is interesting to notice that at this stage appears for the first time a series of Additional Services. These included prayers for the weather, for the realm, for public affairs, and are the precursors of the many which have been issued and sanctioned, outside the Prayer Book, from that day to this.

I say nothing of the 'Visitation Injunctions,' 'Interpretations,' and 'Advertisements' which were issued later, since they were not strictly part

¹ Procter and Frere, p. 101.

of the revision of the Prayer Book ; but the fact remains that further Puritan attacks on the Prayer Book—attacks which began to include the whole episcopal system of the Church—were only frustrated by the determination of the Queen herself. She was not a religious woman in our acceptation of the term, but she was shrewd to a degree, and in these matters of worship she saw further than most of her subjects. To her we owe the fortunate fact that the inevitable reaction after the enormities of the Marian persecution was kept within reasonable bounds. The final breach with Rome came in her day—up till the Bull of 1570 excommunicating her and absolving her subjects from their allegiance, Roman Catholics had regularly worshipped in their parish churches. But there was no breach in the continuity of the episcopate. That had been secured and has never been lost. Indeed that *some* bishops in Elizabeth's time were true Fathers-in-God would seem to be suggested, if not proved, in the famous lines in which Shakespeare draws his picture :

Who hath not heard it spoken
How deep you were within the books of God ?
To us the speaker in his parliament ;
To us the imagined voice of God himself ;
The very opener and intelligencer
Between the grace, the sanctities of heaven
And our dull workings.

In one aspect Elizabeth's reign was a breathing space between the headlong race of revolution and

revision and reaction under Henry and Edward VI and Mary, and the new tyranny that was in store in the succeeding century. England had ejected Rome from the citadel, but Geneva was waiting outside, and already knocking loudly for admittance. If one tyranny was fading, another was already on the horizon. Meanwhile men thought and wrote plays and poems and built magnificent houses, and went to church at seven and eight in the morning for Morning Prayer, Litany, and Communion, and at two or three o'clock for Evening Prayer ; and revelled in the glorious freedom of the age. There was an Elizabethan 'settlement' in more senses than one, but in the Church at least, though it laid down some of the lines of a Catholic Anglicanism, it was no abiding settlement. That has never yet been accomplished, but I will make bold to say that we are nearer to it in 1927 than ever before.

§

The state of Puritan opinion when James I came to the throne may best be gauged from the fact that on his way from Scotland to London he was confronted with a petition signed by some 800 Puritan clergy, in which they requested the disuse of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism and of the ring in Marriage ; the total abolition of Confirmation, and of the terms 'priest' and 'absolution' in the Prayer Book. Accordingly the King summoned a Conference at Hampton Court, in which, as president and as one who took

a leading part in the debates, he enjoyed himself to the full, beginning with an hour's speech from the chair. In consequence, certain alterations and additions were made, as, for example, some additions to the Collects for Royalty, certain new Special Thanksgivings, and Occasional Prayers. In view of more recent discussions it is interesting to notice that the phrase in the Marriage Service 'with my body I thee worship' was enlarged to 'with my body I thee worship and honour.' This at least was agreed at the Conference, though it was not afterwards adopted. The last part of the Catechism—on the Sacraments—was added, and was probably written by the Dean of St. Paul's, Overall,¹ who was also Prolocutor of the Lower House of Convocation.

The Puritan demand was for a Genevan doctrine and discipline totally incompatible with those of the Historic Church, and when the Church's position was definitely stated in the Canons of 1604, and compliance demanded, some 300 ministers left their cures and retired to haunts religiously more congenial, on the Continent. In one point James whole-heartedly met the wishes of his Puritan subjects. He ordered a new translation of the Bible—our 'authorised' version—and thereby conferred upon Church and nation, upon Catholic and Puritan, a boon of inestimable value. The Puritans had failed to capture the Church by argument. It remained for them to attempt to do so by force, though, but

¹ But using materials from Nowell's Catechisms.

for the unwisdom (to put it mildly) of Charles and of Laud, the occasion for this might never have arisen.

§

There was no further revision of the Prayer Book—only its suppression—until the storm of the Civil War was over and Charles II was welcomed back to his rightful domain. He was eager for peace. ‘If the general distraction and confusion which is spread over the whole kingdom’—so he said in the message to his people dated at Breda, and read in Parliament on May 1st, 1660—‘doth not awaken all men to a desire and longing that those wounds which have so many years together been kept bleeding, may be bound up, all we can say will be to no purpose ; however, after this long silence, we have thought it our duty to declare how much we desire to contribute thereunto.’ In a ‘Declaration concerning ecclesiastical affairs’ he undertook to ‘appoint an equal number of divines of both persuasions to review the Book of Common Prayer.’ Accordingly in March 1661 twelve bishops and twelve puritan divines with nine assessors on each side met in conference in the Master’s Lodgings at the Savoy ‘to advise upon and review’ the Book, ‘comparing the same with the most ancient liturgies.’¹ As a result seventeen concessions were made to the Puritan conscience which was represented by the saintly Richard Baxter, on points, some, if not most, of which to us seem comparatively unim-

¹ Brightman, *The English Rite*, vol. i., p. cxciv.

portant. They concern matters like the version of the Bible from which Epistles and Gospels are to be read ; the addition of ' ready and desirous to be confirmed ' to the Confirmation Rubric ; the manual acts in the Holy Communion ; the substitution (again) of ' I thee honour ' for ' I thee worship ' in matrimony. During the months succeeding the Conference, which, as has been seen, was not very fruitful, certain bishops busied themselves with revision, and when Convocation met in November—both Upper Houses sitting together—Royal Letters were read directing a revision. Eight bishops were commissioned for this task, including Cosin of Durham, who took a leading part, as did also Wren of Ely, Sanderson of Lincoln, and Morley of Worcester, later of Winchester. Their work was done apart from the formal sittings of Convocation, but it was discussed by both Houses, the Upper Houses of York and Canterbury, and the Lower House of Canterbury. The pace at which revision proceeded may well fill us with envy, for within a month of the beginning of the session the work was completed. The emendations and additions were recorded by Sancroft, who entered them into an existing copy of the Book, which is now preserved in the library of the House of Lords. A complete copy of the whole was then made, and this was approved and subscribed by all four Houses of Convocation before the year was out. An Act of Uniformity with the Book annexed received the Royal Assent in the following May.

44 THE PRAYER BOOK REVISED

This revision is in many respects the most important since the English Prayer Book of 1549. In it the Church still further emphasised her Catholic position, for in it the last trace disappears of that anti-Catholic bias in revision, the result more of liturgical panic than of careful deliberation, which reached its high-water mark in 1552.

The alterations made in 1662 were not very extensive, but the broad effect of them is to bring the Book still further into line with the best devotional models of Christendom ; to deepen its spiritual tone, and widen its range. Let me summarise the ways in which this is accomplished. We shall find that they are significantly similar to our proceedings in the present revision. To begin with, the revisers sought to remove archaisms ; to elucidate difficulties or ambiguities, whether in rubrics or elsewhere ; they took the Epistles and Gospels from the best version of the Bible then available, that of 1611. Collects were amended when necessary, and some admirable ones added, such as Easter Even and Epiphany VI ; new Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings were added, as also was the renewal of baptismal vows at Confirmation ; Psalms in the Burial of the Dead ; an Order for Adult Baptism ; Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea ; and the Ordinal and the Psalter were included in the Book. There was a definite return to the Book of 1549, both in matter and in language. The Title is a good example, for in the words ' The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the

Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the Use of the Church of England,' it implies that that Church is a branch of the whole Catholic body ; so also is the Commemoration of the Dead at every celebration in the Prayer for the Church Militant.

In the Service of the Holy Communion there are no alterations which call for special notice, but there are a number of minor ones—such as the proper presentation of the alms, the direction as to the Breaking of the Bread, the instruction to say the words of administration to each communicant—which all conduce to greater propriety, reverence, and order. It is more than interesting to notice that there was a strong desire for the restoration of the Canon—the Prayer of Consecration and its accompaniments—to substantially the form and place proposed for it in our present revision and which it now occupies in the Scottish Prayer Book. Cosin at least was exceedingly anxious for this, but it was dropped probably in deference to the Royal Letters, which required only 'reasonable and necessary alterations, corrections and amendments . . . avoiding as much as may be all unnecessary alterations.' Three hundred years hence men will be speculating as to which part of the 1927 Revision is due to this or that bishop, or this or that member of the Convocation Committees. We know that in 1662 Cosin and Wren and Sanderson all took a very responsible part in the work. Not least Sanderson, of whom Izaak Walton reports as follows :

How many of those new Collects were worded by Dr. Sanderson, I cannot say ; but am sure the whole Convocation valued him so much, that he never undertook to speak to any Point in question, but he was heard with great willingness and attention ; and when any Point in question was determin'd, the Convocation did usually desire him to word their intentions, and as usually approve & thank him.

To him we owe the Preface, which was revised by Wren of Ely and three other bishops. If it is slightly provocative, it seems to suggest that there may have been some truth in Richard Baxter's comment—' his great Learning and Worth are known by his Labours, and his aged Peevishness not unknown.'¹

§

Thus briefly, and I hope not wholly inadequately, we have surveyed the construction and the various reconstructions of the Prayer Book. The survey has made us realise the revolutionary, one might almost say the volcanic, character of the period, both from the political and the religious point of view. The whole span is only a century and a quarter, yet during this short interval the official ecclesiastical *régime* in England was wholly papal (as in the earliest years of Henry VIII and in Mary's reign), definitely Catholic (as in 1548), definitely Protestant (as in 1552), based on a compromise (enforced by royalty under Elizabeth), predominantly Anglican (as under Charles I, and

¹ Brightman, *The English Rite*, vol. i., p. ccxi.

later under Charles II), wholly Calvinistic (as in the Commonwealth). Throughout the period there was a discontented and sometimes dangerous minority, Catholic (as in the Rebellion in the West), Protestant (as in Queen Mary's tyranny), Recusant (as under Elizabeth and later), Puritan (as from 1560 onwards). A modern parallel would be to suppose that between 1800 and 1927 England was predominantly Roman, then predominantly Protestant, then predominantly Anglican, then predominantly Nonconformist, then predominantly Anglican, each in turn, and moreover each transformation effected by the full authority of the State, with or without that of the Church, together with a revision of the Prayer Book to correspond. It would be impossible to regard such a series of changes—especially in view of the fact that they were swept along with the swirling current of English politics which during that period was a series of rapids—as effecting a final and unalterable settlement of the Anglican position. In one sense indeed that position always was 'settled,' on the fundamentals of Catholic faith and order, but the whole genius of Anglicanism is that it can grow and it can learn. At each well-marked stage it seeks to make its theological outlook and the expression of its devotional life correspond with the knowledge and experience it has gained. This was true in 1549, in 1552, in 1559, in 1604, in 1662. It is true in 1927.

CHAPTER III

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

The shepherds sing ; and shall I silent be ?
My God, no hymne for thee ?
My soul's a shepherd too ; a flock it feeds
Of thoughts and words and deeds :
The pasture is thy word ; the streams thy grace,
Enriching all the place.
Shepherd and flock shall sing, and all my powers
Out-sing the day-light houres.

GEORGE HERBERT.

THE first noticeable fact is that the call is not responded to : and it is alarming. Alarming, because the 'urge' to worship is age-long and universal, therefore if a civilisation neglects it there must be something seriously wrong. One writer goes so far as to say that Christendom is leaving the Church,¹ but it is certain that many Christians, and many who stand on the borderline of organised religion, have left it so far as any regular attendance at public worship is concerned. The Easter Communicants of the Church of England, say in the year 1500, would have been 90 per cent. of the adult population ; last year it was ten per cent. I am not estimating the hold of religion upon the people, but their

¹ Dr. Percy Dearmer.

attendance at church on the day when—more than at any other time—it is a test of membership of Christ's Society.

The explanations or excuses for this state of affairs are legion. Dull services,¹ poor singing, ill-prepared and ill-delivered sermons, pew-rents or their absence—all these are the stock-in-trade of the absentee who must find some excuse: and they are far from trivial or frivolous. But there are deeper causes. The break-up of church-going habits at the time of the industrial revolution, when the bulk of the working population began to be herded into industrial towns, has never been made good. There was a Victorian convention of church-going, and most valuable it was, but it was confined in the main to the more comfortable classes. We may at least console ourselves now with the fact that attendance at public worship is not a matter of convention or fashion, but of deliberate desire. If we probe more deeply still, we shall find a distrust or distaste for definite doctrine, such as is implied in creeds and prayers, and inclination to emphasise the ethical

¹ The words of the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on Worship (S.P.C.K., 1918) are worth quoting here, pp. 17, 18:

'It is obvious that the quality and attractiveness of the worship will depend to a great extent upon the rendering of the services by the clergy. It is impossible, for instance, to expect people to attend, or to attempt to join in services in which the priest's part is generally inaudible or delivered in a dull and unspiritual manner. Details which may appear small, like unpunctuality, or excessive speed or slowness, or fidgety and muddled ceremonial, or long and unintelligible pauses, may put serious obstacles in the way of people who are willing and anxious to attend.'

rather than the supernatural, to be more interested in a vague philanthropy than in the character of God. Nor have we recovered from the far-reaching unsettlement of the War, a time when of necessity set forms and rubrics were thrown to the winds and 'an immense, spontaneous, amicable anarchy sprang into being,'¹ and this not in an army such as fought Napoleon at Waterloo, but in an army which included the entire man-population of military age. Below this was an unsettlement of faith which had, and has, serious reactions on church-going habits.

Looking at the technique of worship, it is true that we need better equipped clergy, better trained organists and choirs, but this is largely a matter of money, and the average churchman has hardly yet learned to give, still less to realise that these matters are 'household expenses' and that their provision is a matter of duty, not of sacrifice. The old jibe has not yet lost its point that for threepence a Sunday the churchgoer expects an eloquent preacher, a first-rate choir, a comfortable pew, and a church well furnished and warmed. The fault is not confined to the chancel and the reading-desk. The pew must take its share of the blame. Its occupant too frequently regards the service as an entertainment offered to him, to be applauded or criticised much as he would applaud or criticise a piece at the theatre. It does not occur to him that he

¹ *The Church in the Furnace*, by Seventeen Chaplains on Active Service.

has a personal responsibility for the service, that much depends on his mental attitude and his alertness or otherwise in taking his part. Few congregations have as yet learned the elements of corporate worship. If they think of the matter at all they regard themselves more as an assembly of persons who happen to attend the same church than as a fellowship engaged in the highest corporate activity of which men are capable, and owing it to each other, as well as to God, to do and be their best. It is true, I suppose, of most congregations that *outside the church* a man or a woman would not feel at liberty to speak to a fellow-communicant without an introduction! Yet what better introduction could there be than the fact of being fellow-worshippers at the same altar? Frequently indeed there is so little corporate worship in the church because there is so little corporate life in the parish. The Service, of course, has its moments of uplift, a rousing hymn or an inspiring sermon, but during 'the prayers' it is probable that the thoughts of a large proportion of the congregation are ranging round the world or more probably round the home from which they have come or the office to which, on the morrow, they will return.

This may sound somewhat pessimistic, but I believe that the tide has turned, and that we are already on the way to better things. There is a real revival of interest, indeed interest is too weak a word, in all that concerns our worship, both on

the side of art—the colour, the music, the action, but also in its more specifically human aspect, its psychology, its ‘atmosphere,’ and its evangelistic appeal. Schools for clergy, schools for organists, congregational singing practices, these and other like activities show that the wind of reform is blowing, and the result, as we hope, will be the disappearance of many cobwebs, and the establishment of a more bracing climate in which many somnolent souls will revive.

For this health-giving revival the one thing needful—apart from the disposition of the worshippers—was and is a Prayer Book amplified, enriched, and in the best sense modernised. That ‘one thing’ is here, and ready to hand. To us of this generation this priceless boon has been granted. My business in this chapter is to exhibit its usefulness—I would rather say its beauty—in those most familiar and often criticised services, Morning and Evening Prayer.

It is significant and satisfactory to note precisely what reforms were called for by such responsible groups of Churchmen as the chaplains¹ who served at the front in the War and the members of the Committee which, at the Archbishop’s instigation, produced the Report on Worship already referred to.² For, in the new Book, practically all that they asked for is given, and all the criticisms they made are met.

¹ *The Church in the Furnace*, chapters vii. and viii.

² *Report on the Worship of the Church*, pp. 24–26.

Turn to the Book itself, and look first at

THE INTRODUCTION

to Morning or Evening Prayer. We notice at once that the opening sentences have been amplified and extended. It will be possible now to begin the service with a sentence *which speaks directly of worship*, for the tremendous saying of our Lord, recorded by St. John ('God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth') is now included, as also the Psalmist's exhortation to 'worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.' Further, for the first time it will be possible to use a sentence in keeping with the season, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, etc., and thus to sound the right keynote at the outset. To begin the Christmas service with 'Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy' will be more inspiring than the very general 'To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses' which has been hitherto the solitary and rather inadequate refuge of the reader on all festival occasions. This reform—the adaptation of the sentences to the seasons—is at once so simple and so welcome that it is amazing that we should have had to wait nearly four centuries for it,¹ but the remark might be made of many other items in the Revision. It is an admirable instance of that reasonable elasticity which is one of the obvious principles of the present revision, and which is further

¹ The sentences were first introduced in 1552.

exemplified in the Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings and in the Alternative Conclusions to Evening Prayer.¹

The Alternative Exhortation ('Brethren, we are come together . . .') is a simple statement of the purposes of public worship. Two features in it are noteworthy: its remembrance of our fellow-worshippers in the unseen world ('we are come together in the presence of Almighty God and of the whole company of Heaven'), and also its suggestion of a silence before the acts of worship begin ('Wherefore let us kneel in silence and remember God's Presence with us now'). We notice too the Rubric—'Thereupon silence shall be kept for a space, all kneeling.' Thus for the first time in our liturgical history the power of silence in worship is officially recognised.² And this is peculiarly welcome. We have been and are too 'busy' in our services. The solemn exhortation of the prophet is observed chiefly in the almost complete neglect of it in every church: 'The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him.'

It is easy to make merry at the expense of 'Dearly beloved,' the ancient and familiar exhortation to which now there is this new alternative, but it is a superb piece of English prose, and it states the objects of public worship with complete adequacy and dignity. There is a shorter

¹ See Rubric at the end of Evening Prayer.

² To those who desire to study this subject further I recommend Canon Hefher's book, *The Fellowship of Silence*.

and simpler Confession provided, in spite of or perhaps because of the alleged fact that 'nothing puts the weird British temperament so wholly at ease as to start repeating the General Confession.'¹ Likewise the ancient Absolution from Prime and Compline is allowed as a substitute for the longer form, though again this longer form is unsurpassed in the beauty of its language.

Permission is given to omit the whole of this introduction on Sundays which are Principal Feasts, but the use of the alternative forms would in any case make it very short. I hope, however, that this permission will encourage the authorities of those churches where a Sung Eucharist is the main morning service to use this shortened form of Mattins as a prelude and thus to avoid the very serious loss of the Psalm, the Old Testament lesson, and the *Te Deum*.² In ordinary circumstances in such churches, on Christmas Day for example, the congregation sing no Psalm, nor do they hear the heart-moving words of the famous lesson in Isaiah, nor is *Te Deum* upon their lips on a day—and the same is true of Easter-Day—when it cries out to be sung.

I pass from the Introduction to the

ALTERNATIVE ORDER FOR MORNING PRAYER.

The service follows the lines of the first English Prayer Book, for it will be remembered

¹ The Rev. E. Milner-White in *The Church in the Furnace*, p. 178.

² I do not emphasise the loss of the New Testament lesson, in view of the Epistle and Gospel.

that the Introduction was only added in 1552. The versicle 'O Lord, open Thou our lips' is the natural beginning, and it will be noted that this is the first moment in the service when the Rubric allows the minister to 'sing.' All that precedes in the Introduction is to be 'read' or 'said.'

Very properly the concluding verses of the *Venite* are omitted. They refer to an episode of the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness with which I fear the average worshipper is not very familiar, and end with a stern sentence of punishment, which in this devotional use of the Psalm is entirely inappropriate. As it is, the Psalm ends on that pastoral note, so familiar in the New Testament as well as in the Old, 'for we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.' This is not the only case where verses are omitted from a psalm. In the 51st Psalm, a permitted alternative to the *Te Deum*, the last verse is omitted—an omission which will commend itself for reasons which will be explained later. Further, omissions are allowed in the singing or saying of the Psalter, particularly in what are usually called the Imprecatory Psalms. Are such alterations of the original text permissible? They are, for the Prayer Book does not profess to contain a complete edition of the Psalter exactly as it was written. Apart from any omissions, Coverdale's English, beautiful as it is, is often sadly successful in obscuring the real meaning. The Psalms in the Prayer Book

are for *devotional* use, and it is therefore not merely allowable but advisable to leave out whatever is inconsistent with that object. No one is edified by joining in the denunciations of the 109th Psalm. The enemies of God may be deserving of punishment, and the inspired poet may have a perfect right so to denounce them, but that is no reason why a Christian congregation should deliberately choose to re-echo sentiments which, if the writer had known Christ, or had read the Sermon on the Mount, he would never have uttered. Take another instance of a different kind. We have already noticed that the 51st Psalm is an allowed alternative to the *Te Deum*—to be used, presumably, mainly in the penitential seasons. The last verse is omitted. And why? Because it breathes a totally different atmosphere to that of the verses which precede. They—the preceding verses—might be a New Testament document. Every verse emphasises the spiritual side of religion, until the climax is reached in the supreme declaration ‘Thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it Thee : but Thou delightest not in burnt offerings. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit : a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.’ But in the last verse, omitted here, we suddenly drop from this level. The clock of spiritual development is put back, and we find ourselves in the region of slaughtered animals, ‘young bullocks on the altar,’ and all the paraphernalia of offerings such as they were, for instance, in the days of Solomon.

It is difficult to believe that the verse could have been written by the author of the heart-searching verses that precede it. But whether this was so or not, there can be no reason why it should form part of the devotions of the Christian Church, least of all in a canticle designed to take the place of the *Te Deum*. This digression was caused by the omission of the concluding verses of the *Venite*, and to the *Venite* I must now return.

An interesting feature in connection with it is the series of 'Invitatories,' one for each Festival, which are now provided. The *Venite* has been generally known as the Invitatory Psalm, for the obvious reason that it invites the people to worship. Apart from that, the Invitatory was a refrain sung before it, and repeated in part, or as a whole, after certain verses.¹ This custom—of *Venite* and Invitatory—is very ancient, at least as old as St. Benedict,² but this arrangement of the Invitatory was naturally regarded by our Reformers as over-elaborate for an ordinary congregation, however suitable it might be in a monastic church. Accordingly Cranmer (following Quiñones) cut out the Invitatory altogether. Now it is restored, but with the much simpler plan by which the Invitatory is to be sung twice only, before the *Venite* begins, and after its concluding Gloria. The object of the Invitatory is obvious. It gives a more definite point to the invitation to worship, by associating it with the

¹ Procter and Frere, p. 376.

² A.D. 540.

thought of each Festival as it comes. It is a kind of corporate and worshipful ejaculation appropriate to the particular season, and is therefore one of the many methods by which the new book helps a congregation to concentrate its thoughts, and gives local colour (so to speak) to its approach to God.

The new rubric in regard to the mode of announcement of the passages to be read as the lessons is a gain. It will put an end to the present rather confusing variety. Needless to say it is much to be desired that the old habit of following the lessons in a Bible or a Service Book should be restored. Now that we have a Revised Lectionary and (I hope it may be added) a more intelligent appreciation of the Bible itself, this Revision would seem to be an admirable opportunity for making a new start in this respect. I must confess that in this matter we of the clergy are not free from blame. Some of us read, not so much badly, as dully, lifelessly ; and, broadly speaking, we have not explained to the people as frankly and carefully as we ought the new light in which, as a result of the scholarship of the last fifty years and more, the wonderful 'library' is now seen. We have allowed the vague impression to grow that somehow its authority has been undermined, without explaining how that authority, which in the minds of many seemed to have been alarmingly dislodged, has, in fact, been rebuilt on far more secure foundations.

The 'paragraphing' of the *Te Deum*¹ is an improvement long overdue. Obviously the hymn falls into two parts, with an appendix. The first part (vv. 1-13) is an act of praise to the Father, and to the Holy Trinity²; the second (vv. 14-21) is a similar act of praise to Christ, and a commemoration of His redemptive work, based on which is the prayer in the closing verses (20, 21). It is perhaps worth noting that the misprint³ (in the Latin) *numerari* for *munerari* (in v. 21) has persisted not only through every revision of the Prayer Book but since the Breviary of 1491. 'Make them to be rewarded'—not 'numbered'—'with Thy Saints' is probably the true reading. The third part (vv. 22-29) is a series of versicles and responses, and did not originally belong to the hymn itself. This 'paragraphing' very properly applies to the *Benedicite* as well.

A still further alternative (Psalm 40) is provided for the *Te Deum* if and when Psalm 51 has already been said or sung in the service for the day. A 'permission' which will be widely used when a celebration of the Holy Communion or some other Service, as for instance Holy Baptism, immediately follows, is that Morning Prayer may

¹ The old legend, of course, was that it was sung at the baptism of St. Augustine and St. Ambrose by the two saints extempore, by direct inspiration. The real author was a missionary bishop, Niceta, who lived and worked in Dacia at the end of the fourth century.

² There seems to be no reason why this should be divided into two paragraphs as in the new book.

³ If it be a misprint, for Dr. Brightman informs me that the reading 'numerari' is much older than 1491.

be ended at the Third Collect, or at the Canticle after the Second Lesson, or after the Salutation ('The Lord be with you' and its response), together with one or more of the prescribed Collects. If there be no service following, the minister may use any of the Occasional Prayers or Thanksgivings, or others duly authorised, provided that he close the office with the Prayer of St. Chrysostom and the Grace.

I must say a word at this point about the *Quicumque Vult*—the Creed of St. Athanasius,¹ as it is called. In this Revision it is given in a new translation, and the rule as to its use is relaxed. Probably there is no part of the Revision which will give greater satisfaction, to the average layman at least, than this. He will find that permission is given to omit the verses (2 and 42) to which he most objects; the translation is better (*e.g.* 'infinite' is substituted for 'incomprehensible'); and the Rubric is so worded that the 'Creed' need not be said at all in any given church. A large latitude, and a grave responsibility, is thereby given to the clergy. But our lay friend will, if he is wise, pause in the midst of his satisfaction. To begin with, the verses to which he objects² are capable of an interpretation which is not to be lightly dismissed, and which (in the second

¹ It was certainly not written by St. Athanasius, though it represents the faith which he held.

² v. 2: 'Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.' v. 42: 'This is the Catholick Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.'

verse at least) is much clearer in the new translation. Unfortunately the words 'eternal,' 'saved,' and the like are associated in the minds of many persons, who have never revised the ideas of childhood, with crude pictures of hell and heaven, and most of all with *time* notions of eternity. But 'eternal life' and 'salvation' are not subject to our crude measurements. They are concerned with *quality*, not quantity. And it is obviously true that the Catholic Faith is the only possible basis for that quality of life and character which can be called 'eternal' and whose possessor can be described as 'saved'—that is, spiritually healthy. We do not pass judgment on those who have not known the Catholic Faith, or to whom (may be) it has been misrepresented. But we do say that the knowledge of God in Christ is the indispensable condition of that quality of life which enables a man to fulfil God's purpose in creating him, and over which death has no power. Moreover, our friend will remember that this creed is not a creed at all, but in the nature of a canticle, and should be used as such. I hope its use *on occasion* will not be easily discarded. In my judgment the first part at least should always be said on Trinity Sunday, and the second part—the Incarnation section—should (as is suggested) be said on the Sunday after Christmas Day, if not on Christmas Day itself, and on the Festival of the Annunciation. Some of our forefathers, it should be carefully remembered, attached supreme importance to the recitation of this 'creed.' They

regarded it almost as the '*articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*.' Indeed the time and energy spent in this controversy is almost incredible. Broadly speaking, it appears that for the last century or so at least the bishops as a body have not regarded its compulsory use as vital to the Church's welfare.¹ The laity have always clamoured for relief.² The Royal Commission appointed in 1867 'to inquire into the Rubrics and Ritual of the Church of England' recommended by a majority that an explanation of its condemnatory clauses should be appended. This course, however, did not commend itself to several of the Commissioners, and those not the least important, for the Archbishop (Tait) thought that it did not go far enough, and that a more drastic method of relief was required.³ This, however, was not the view of many of the clergy, who

¹ In 1786 the English bishops seem to have sanctioned its excision from the American Prayer Book when that book was submitted to them. In 1904 a Resolution was adopted by the Upper House of the Canterbury Convocation 'that in their *prima facie* meaning and in the mind of many who hear them those clauses convey a more unqualified statement than Scripture warrants, and one which is not consonant with the language of the greatest teachers of the Church.'

² As far back as 1872 a petition was presented to the two Archbishops, signed by 7000 persons, asking that the public recital of the Creed should be no longer compulsory.

³ 'While I rejoice that the Commissioners have thought it right to append a rubric explanatory of the sense in which the Condemnations in the Confession of Faith are to be understood, I cannot feel entirely satisfied with this course. . . . I should have deemed it a wiser course had the Commission decided that the Creed in question, valuable and most important as are its doctrinal statements, should not retain its place in the Public Service of the Church' (*Life of Archbishop Tait*, ii, 128).

regarded the document as a kind of ark of the Covenant, and who viewed any proposal to tamper with it as almost sacrilege. This was the case with six Oxford professors, all of them men of great piety and distinction,¹ while, oddly enough, the foremost scholars at Cambridge² were ranged on the other side. Liddon indeed went so far as formally to warn the Archbishop that if the Creed were touched, either in its language, or in its prescribed use, he would forthwith resign all his preferments, and retire from the ministry.³ This incident is worth recalling, if only as a salutary reminder of the lack of sense of proportion exhibited sometimes by even the best men in moments of acute controversy. For the line he took,⁴ the Archbishop himself was abused to the end of his life. He was described, for example, as having 'expressed his deliberate contempt for the faith of the Church Catholic' and as having 'publicly stepped over to the side of the Socinian and the infidel.'⁵ No wonder he could say and most of us would agree with him—'Ever since I was a boy I have always heard that the Church of England has been passing through a crisis, and I believe it has. It has got out of all these crises, and it will get out of all others. In point of fact this is nothing more than is true of

¹ Pusey, Ogilvie, Huntley, Bright, Liddon, and Mozley.

² Lightfoot, Swainson, Westcott, and Selwyn.

³ *Life of Archbishop Tait*, ii. 137. Dr. Pusey said the same.

⁴ Which is substantially the line proposed in the present revision, with the concurrence of the overwhelming majority of all parties.

⁵ *Life of Archbishop Tait*, ii. 143.

every good institution throughout the world.’¹ However that may be, I reiterate the hope that, in view of the suggestions and permissions in the revised book this anthem or parts of it may be more frequently, rather than less frequently, heard in our churches.

§

The Alternative Order for Evening Prayer is not materially different from the one for Morning Prayer. There are similar permissions as to what may be done after the Third Collect or (if need be) after the *Nunc Dimittis*, and any further prayers may (as at Mattins) be taken from the Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings, and (unlike Mattins) there is a choice of different Conclusions.

§

I hope that the modifications permitted in the saying of the Litany will, as in the case of the Athanasian Creed, lead to its more frequent use. For most of my generation its value was obscured from our childhood owing to the absurd practice of appending it to an already over-long service. But as a separate service, in procession² or otherwise, it can be indescribably impressive. It is probably the greatest public intercession in Christendom, alike for the range of its petitions and the splendour of its language. The preceding rubric gives some useful ‘discretions’ to

¹ *Life of Archbishop Taft*, ii. 486.

² This was, of course, the original method of its use.

the minister. There is a new petition 'for the forces of the King, by sea, land, and air'; and 'by air' is added to the familiar petition for all travellers. There were prolonged deliberations in the House of Bishops in regard to the possibility of inserting petitions for other classes of citizens—those engaged in labour, for instance, whether of mind or hand, but it was found impossible to particularise all those groups or classes which are obviously deserving of mention without adding very considerably to the number of petitions. It is a distinct advantage to have the last part of the Litany printed as a separate 'Supplication,' for its contents are more than usually penitential, and therefore not so appropriate for ordinary occasions. In it it is made clear that the antiphon 'O Lord, arise . . . ' is to be said by minister and people together, and repeated after the Gloria.

To most people, perhaps, the most impressive enrichment of the old book will be found in the

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS.

The prayers in the old book are so general in their outlook, and the special prayers (such as those for Embertide or for Parliament) are so few, that an element of unreality has inevitably crept in. Too often the impression made on the average worshipper has been that the prayers in church, beautiful indeed in their wording, never seem to get down to the needs and problems which are

in his and everyone's thoughts. Such petitions are 'too high for' him, he 'cannot attain unto them'; too aloof, almost too icily intellectual. He comes into church (it may be) with his mind full of the cause of international peace, or of some menacing industrial trouble, or some great imperial responsibility. But from the first prayer to the last they are not even alluded to. The Prayer Book, so it seems to the worshipper, cares for none of these things. It moves along its appointed course with slow and majestic step, like a 'high-brow' walking down the street, totally indifferent to the passers-by and seemingly unaware that there has just been an accident at the cross-roads and that there is a house on fire a few doors further on. But the section we are considering will put an end to all this. Thirty-two prayers,¹ most of them new to the Prayer Book, are here, and there can be few subjects or contingencies, suitable for mention in public worship, which are not provided for. It is well that the Prayer for the King² (hitherto inserted most unsuitably in the Communion Office, where, in the Prayer for the Church Militant, he is already mentioned) should head this list, and that the Empire should at last find its proper place in the book. It is well, too, that at last, after all these centuries, the people should be encouraged to pray *regularly* for Missions; for the increase of the Sacred Ministry; for the unity of Christendom; for Peace among the Nations, and in our

¹ See pp. 102-112 in the Revised Book.

² Nos. 1 and 5.

Industries ; and to commemorate with due reverence and reticence the Faithful Departed. Prayers are here, too, for Schools and Universities, the Sick and Suffering, and for Hospitals. Provision is made for domestic contingencies of Epidemics, Drought, and Weather, as well as for national contingencies of Government, and of War. Prominent, too, are the needs of the Church in regard to her Clergy, her Convocations, and the National Assembly, and not least her Day of Worship, and for those who are preparing for their full membership in the Church and seeking the power of the Spirit thereunto. The Prayer appointed for use during the Vacancy of a See or of a Parish will help all those concerned to take the most solemn view of their responsibility in the selection of a new bishop or parish priest, and whether the people are legally associated with them or not, they will be thus associated in faith and prayer. The Rogation-tide¹ prayers are extended so as to include the industrial activities of the fishing-net and the workshop as well as the plough.

In the rubrics after the Prayers and after the Thanksgivings² permission is given for the minister to 'bid' the people to pray or to give thanks for any other subject, in the method of a Bidding and Silence, ending with a Versicle and Response. In the concluding prayers are found the familiar 'Remember, O Lord, what Thou

¹ The 'time of the Asking,' first instituted in c. 470, and introduced into England in 747.

² See pp. 113, 114.

hast wrought in us,' together with the beautiful seventeenth-century Collect 'O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life.' Four alternative endings are provided, all of them full of solemnity and peace.

There has been no extensive revision of

THE COLLECTS, EPISTLES AND GOSPELS.

They have been left almost untouched except that in several passages the reading or the translation has been assimilated to the Revised Version of the New Testament. This is not indicated in detail in the Composite Book, but attention is called to it in a prefatory footnote. There is provision for two new Festivals, St. Mary Magdalene, and the Transfiguration, which at last finds a proper commemoration within the Prayer Book. Similarly there is a new provision of Collect, Epistle and Gospel for the second Sunday after Christmas. This provision is the more valuable for the fact that it may be used on any day between the Circumcision and the Epiphany, a period when we have hitherto been shut up to the Collect, Epistle and Gospel for the Circumcision. We have a similar release on the Festival of the Circumcision itself, for there is now added to its own Collect a Collect appropriate to New Year's Day. No better example could be found of the infinite patience of the Church of England than the fact that for centuries we have been content with liturgical provision for the first of January which makes no sort of reference to the

solemnity of entering on a new stage of life's pilgrimage. Easter is provided with an extra Collect, a real boon in view of the many Celebrations at that season. Alternative Epistles are provided for the Circumcision, for the fourth Sunday in Lent, for the thirteenth Sunday after Trinity, and for the Feast of SS. Simon and Jude. In each case the Epistle in the old book is (to the ordinary mind) difficult to understand, and the passage chosen as the alternative is clearer in its meaning. There is an alternative Gospel for Ascension Day—a passage (St. Luke xxiv. 44 ff.) which is an alternative to the much-discussed appendix to St. Mark—and for the tenth Sunday after Trinity, where the parable of the Prodigal Son, which is not otherwise found in the Prayer Book at all, is the alternative to the parable of the Unjust Steward.

A certain discretion is allowed in the reading (or singing) of the Passion on Palm Sunday, the effect of which is that the whole of the 'St. Matthew Passion' may be said or sung at the Holy Communion if it is so desired. A similar discretion in regard to the 'St. John Passion' is allowed on Good Friday; on which day also a revised version of the third Collect is provided.

§

We have now found our way through the earlier part of the book, through Mattins and Evensong and the Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings to

the Collects, Epistles and Gospels. On the way we passed the Athanasian Creed and the Litany, and we thought about them. We could not but notice, at every step, instance after instance of the principles lying behind this Revision. *Unity in diversity*, for example ; for in the Occasional Prayers, though there is a large variety of subject and expression, there shines through it all the light of that most uniting of all psychological experiences—the prayer-activity of a congregation deliberately concentrating itself on its approach to God. Then, too, every care has been taken to *associate the people with the minister* in this spiritual action. This is the main point of the many versicles and responses which are now inserted in the book and prefixed to a number of the prayers. Puritan worship in past days, and to a large extent in our own day, was too exclusively clerical. The people were delivered bound and helpless to the capacities or incapacities of the officiating minister. From this bondage they are completely delivered in the Prayer Book, and in the new book the co-operation of minister and people is still more actively secured. Nor is this the only benefit of the versicles. They are almost entirely from the Bible. Accordingly they immensely increase the Scriptural element in our worship, and by their position they set the tone of mind and spirit for the prayers or praises which follow. They are a very good example of spiritual ‘suggestion.’

The experience of a chaplain in the War is

worth quoting here, for the desires and capacities of an average congregation have not changed since then.¹

Last, but not least, the services are now so provided that not one of them need be unduly long. There is a reasonableness in the 'demand for brevity' referred to elsewhere. And it is the more reasonable if as a result of this revision congregations begin to learn anew the high art of corporate worship, with all the spiritual alertness and mental concentration which is involved.

The Call to Worship is urgent from every point of view. 'My duty towards God is . . . to worship Him.' To respond to that call means a spiritual revival, a renewed perception of God's character and purposes, and a renewed faith in the power of prayer. For that revival all lovers of Church and nation are, or should be, praying. For 'the Father' has promised 'to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.' Through His inspiration alone the revival will come, but

¹ *The Church in the Furnace*, pp. 192-3: 'In dealing with Englishmen, the converse is yet more true—the share of the congregation must be raised to a maximum. Even in the old offices, advance can be made to this end. The former custom of clergy and people reciting together the General Thanksgiving has been universally restored in France, and added to by the common recitation of many another well-known prayer. Order does not suffer; reality, sincerity and atmosphere gain enormously. The versicles in France have moved from triumph to triumph; and we have known the congregation time after time burst into their Stainer settings with less than no encouragement from the chaplain! Men love to have their part, and with our unique reverence and orderliness during service it can be safely given to them, to the help of everybody and to a distinct growth of warmth and impressiveness.'

the earnest of its coming is surely this movement in the Church, also due to His inspiration, which has impelled us to revise our instrument of public prayer. For this movement, as we hope, and this Prayer Book will inaugurate a fresh adventure in our devotions and therefore a fresh potency in the world-wide task with which we are entrusted.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Christ's was the word that spake it,
He took the bread and brake it,
And what that word doth make it
That I believe and take it.¹

THE Holy Communion is the supreme act of Christian worship. Round it gather the associations of centuries. In it millions have found the core and centre of their spiritual experience. It is so infinitely precious that the form of words used to express our devotion therein is at once keenly scrutinised and jealously guarded. That expression must be the worthiest attainable in our human language. Therefore it is argued on the one hand that the service to which we are accustomed must on no account be touched ; and on the other hand it is maintained that if it is capable of improvement, that improvement must be taken in hand at whatever cost to sensibilities which, however intelligible, are not necessarily decisive. The present revision includes an Alternative Order of the Service. Is that advisable ? Is it

¹ Attributed by some to Queen Elizabeth ; by others to Dean Donne of St. Paul's.

even justifiable? In my judgment it is. It will be seen as we proceed that there have been those in every century since the Reformation, and among them some of the choicest spirits in our Church, who have complained that the existing Office is not wholly satisfactory. Let one of them speak for a multitude of others. The saintly Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man, in the eighteenth century, thought it necessary to compile his own devotions at the altar

to render our present Communion Service more agreeable to Apostolic usage, and more acceptable (I hope) to God, and beneficial to all that partake thereof. Until it shall please Him to put it into the hearts and power of such as ought to do it, to restore to us the First Service of Edward VI or such as shall be more conformable to the appointment of Christ and His Apostles, and their successors. Which may the Divine Majesty vouchsafe to grant, for His sake Who first ordained the Holy Sacrament.¹

Further, since our present Service was constructed a whole science of liturgiology (as it is called) has arisen, and information is now available as to many of the ancient forms which was hidden from Cranmer and his successors in later revisions. But there are reasons more weighty than these, and the chief of them is that we now have a priceless opportunity of reviving the ancient ideal of unity in variety. In earlier days there was no attempt to compel a rigid uniformity. It is true that in the case of the Holy Communion there was a certain fundamental

¹ Bishop Wilson, *Sacra Privata*. *Works*, V. 74.

identity of plan, but in much of the detail East differed from West ; Italy and Gaul and Spain and Milan had their own 'uses' ; in the East the 'use' of Antioch was not the same as that of Alexandria, or even as that of Constantinople. The ideal of uniformity in worship is a legacy of that break-up of the mediaeval Church into national churches like our own, and of the time when, as in the days of Edward VI or Charles II, Church and State were so deeply intertwined that loyalty to the Queen (as in the case of Queen Elizabeth) was only the reverse side of loyalty to the Prayer Book. Tolerance was unknown, and the only way (as it was thought) to secure adhesion to the State was to insist on adhesion to the Church, and this meant adhesion to the prescribed form of worship, whatever it might be.

In this prison of uniformity some would still confine us, but as a fact the doors are already open quite apart from the present revision. 'The snare is broken, and we are delivered,' for in the Anglican Communion—and our purview in this revision must never be narrower—there are already at least four if not five different authorised forms of the Holy Communion. One is the Scottish use ; another is the use in the United States ; another is the South African use ; another is a use authorised for experiment in the Diocese of Bombay, and the fifth is the 'old Prayer Book.' Thus the day is long past for arguing for one form, and one only. That may or may not be advisable in any given district of

the Anglican Communion, but as a *principle* it has been emphatically repudiated. Nor is the contention upheld by experience that the existence of two alternative forms in any one country or in any one Prayer Book is confusing and militates against devotion.¹ There is nothing sacrosanct about uniformity even in our most sacred moments. Even a cursory inspection of God's ways in nature and in history would make us suspicious of it, and indeed almost every trend of modern thought—not always to be followed, but here surely reasonable—looks towards an ordered freedom. Uniformity, then, is really an ideal of Tudor and Stuart days, and has obtained a firm lodgment in many minds ever since. The new Prayer Book in this, as in other moments of our worship, declines this ideal and revives the much more Christian ideal of unity in variety. It is perhaps worth remarking that this has larger implications, and that to cling to the ideal of

¹ See, for example, the Bishop of Edinburgh's letter to *The Times*, March 31, 1927: 'In our Cathedral we have had for many years two alternative uses of the Holy Communion, more strongly marked in contrast than those proposed in the new English service book. During week-days the English office of 1662 is used on three days and the Scottish office on the alternate days. On Sundays there is variety of usage. And this change, so far from being disliked, is welcomed by some congregations who will insist on substituting the use of both offices in the place of the one to which they have become accustomed. It is not what I should have expected, but directly a much-criticised measure has passed into law congregations are much more accommodating than might be supposed. Our Cathedral is parochial as well as diocesan, and is liable, therefore, to all the friction which Protestant and Catholic tendencies produce, but I have never heard a single complaint from either side.'

uniformity, whether in worship or in order, is to abandon all hope of Christian reunion.

§

Taking in our hands now the Alternative Order, we note at the outset, in the opening rubric, the beautiful phrase 'God's Board,' which comes direct from the first English Prayer Book of 1549. What more appropriate words could be found to introduce an act of worship pre-eminently addressed (as in all the old liturgies) to the Father, who here welcomes His children that He may give them the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation?

A peculiarly helpful feature of the alternative service now confronts us, namely, the title of the next period or paragraph in the Order. There are eight such titles. THE INTRODUCTION to begin with.

There follow, after the Lord's Prayer and the Collect for Purity, the Ten Commandments which (by the new rubric) *must* be said once a month, but for which on occasion our Lord's Summary of the Law may be substituted. Otherwise, but not on Sundays, the ancient 'Kyrie' may be used, a provision obviously intended for the large and growing number of churches where there is a daily celebration.

The second is THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD, and is, of course, concerned with the Epistle and Gospel. There is always a moving solemnity about the reading of the Gospel, sometimes

attended with ceremonial and preceded by a hymn or anthem, as the heavenly message on which our faith is based and on which our 'hopes of Heaven' depend. The Creed is then said, followed by the sermon (if such there is), and then another welcome addition emerges—namely, the very much extended Offertory Sentences. Some of the new ones are of general application, as, for instance, the saying of our Lord recorded by St. Paul—'Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive'; others are appropriate to the support of the ministry (as the ninth and tenth); or to the claims of the Mission Field (as the fifteenth)—'Lift up your eyes and look upon the fields; for they are white already to harvest'; or to the sick and the suffering; and one refers to the offering of the bread and wine which in all liturgies is an integral part, if not indeed, properly, the main feature, of the Offertory. The rubric then prescribes the preparation of the elements, and mentions the universal and (so far as we know) original custom of mingling a little water with the wine. This has sometimes, as in the Lincoln case, been alleged as an instance of undue 'ritualism.' It is in reality nothing of the kind. The 'ritual' is the preparation of the chalice, whether with wine only, or with wine and water, and this type of complaint is an example of the ignorance whereby attention has been diverted from the things which really matter to points which are unimportant and irrelevant in any controversy

between 'high' and 'low' churchmanship. Such ignorance has unfortunately reached its zenith in controversies in regard to the Holy Communion, but I do not wish to refer to it again.

It may be helpful to my readers if, before proceeding further into the service, I try to sketch in a few sentences the *earliest* known type of the service outside the New Testament itself. It appears that by the year A.D. 95, that is, probably within the lifetime of St. John, there was a 'set service' of the Holy Communion, for in a letter written by Clement of Rome to the Corinthians he exhorts his readers to observe 'the appointed rule of His service . . . acting with all seemliness.'¹ The word here used for 'service' is the Greek word which has been transliterated into English as 'liturgy,'² which always indicates a ministry of prayer and sacrifice, and is now the technical word for the Order of the Holy Communion. In a writer of the second century, however, Justin Martyr, an enthusiastic philosopher who, after trying many teachers, at last found satisfaction in Christianity, we have a more or less detailed account of a 'celebration' in his day. It included the following items, most of which are still in our service: (1) Lessons (as we should call them) from the 'Memoirs of the Apostles or

¹ Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, p. 74.

² In the classical period the word meant a public office which a citizen undertakes to administer at his own expense. In the Septuagint the word is used of the Levitical service.

the writings of the prophets' ; (2) Sermon by the ' president ' ; (3) ' Common Prayer ' of Intercession ; (4) The Kiss of Peace ; (5) Presentation to the president of bread and a cup of wine and water ; (6) Praise, Prayer, and Thanksgiving—the Consecration (as we should say)—offered by the president, mainly if not entirely extempore,¹ and responded to by the congregation with Amen ; (7) administration of the Bread and Wine to those present, and their conveyance to those who are absent. There is also a Collection for the relief of the needy. The consecrated Food is called ' Eucharist ' and the Bread of the Eucharist is ' offered as a memorial of the Passion.'² It will be seen that had you or I attended a ' celebration ' in Rome in the year 150 we should have found a service in its essentials the same as that to which we are now accustomed. The great act of worship is the same, though its accompaniments, and indeed its interpretation, have differed in different ages.

It is plain from this that certain features of the service have been constant. They are as follows : (1) Intercession ; (2) Thanksgiving ; (3) Consecration ; (4) Oblation or Offering ; (5) Communion. We shall find that they are all amply represented in our revised service.

¹ Justin says ' according to his power,' which does not necessarily mean what we call extempore.

² Sawley, *Early History of the Liturgy*, p. 34 ff.

THE INTERCESSION.

This, it will be observed, is the next titled paragraph. It has always been the fact throughout Christendom that the Holy Communion was and is the Church's great act of intercession. In the earliest forms of the service, in the East and in the West, one of the first 'moments' was prayers both for the congregation, for the Church, and for the world at large. In our service this intercession takes the form of the Biddings¹ and the prayer 'for the whole state of Christ's Church.' The Biddings were a revival of a very ancient custom, possibly as old as Charlemagne.² In the sixteenth century the 'bidding of bedes' meant the 'praying of prayers,' but 'bid' soon began to be confused with the 'bid' meaning 'command' or 'enjoin,' and therefore 'bidding prayers' meant prayers enjoined by the priest on the congregation. The practice was endorsed by Henry VIII³ and is enjoined in the 55th Canon of 1604. Originally, of course, it was a vernacular interlude in a Latin service, but now it gives the priest a most precious opportunity to direct the intercessions of his congregation in accordance with the circumstances of the moment, whether in Church or nation or parish, or to suggest a special 'intention' for the service.

¹ See the rubric before the Intercession: 'The Priest may here bid special prayers and thanksgivings.'

² Brightman, *The English Rite*, vol. ii., p. 1022.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 1026.

This imparts a certain homely touch to the great solemnity.

Coming now to 'The Prayer for the Church Militant' (which last word is now omitted) we note the widening of its scope, so as to include the whole Body of Christ in this world and in Paradise—'Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church'—and the added mention of certain members of the Church commissioned with a peculiar responsibility for commending and spreading the faith of the Gospel, namely, missionaries and teachers.¹

The commemoration of the dead is more explicit than in the old Book, but preserves the reverence and reticence which was characteristic both of the early Church and of our own Church in more recent times. The commendation of the Blessed Dead to the Lord's keeping and the prayer that they may have 'everlasting light and peace' follows primitive lines.² The supreme argument for such prayers is our Lord's. *They are not dead.* 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,' and if so, and if they are still members of the Divine Family Circle, they are not beyond the reach of our prayers. Do they need them? Such prayers are the natural expression of our love for our dear ones beyond the veil. But apart from that there is no reason to suppose that the incident of death is itself a

¹ § 4 of the Prayer.

² There are at least six documents and writers before A.D. 300 who refer to prayers for the dead.

guarantee that the man or woman then and there attains perfection, and that spiritual progress thereby comes to an end. Such a sudden and abrupt attainment of the goal (if I may so speak) is not God's way either in nature or in grace. Modern theories of evolution, which are attempted explanations of God's working, look in another direction. That the blessed dead—the 'living' as they ought to be called—are freed from the hindrances and contaminations of this world is true indeed, and we may well believe that their progress in character and their experience of God goes forward more swiftly than we can conceive in that land of everlasting light. But are we *certain* that the 'wrestling, not against flesh and blood, but against . . . spiritual hosts of wickedness in Heavenly places' comes to a final close when they pass hence? Alike our fellow-membership in Christ's Body, our ignorance and our knowledge (so far as it goes) constrain us to maintain the nexus of love and prayer 'that the good work which Thou didst begin in them may be perfected unto the day of Jesus Christ.'¹ The Church took over this custom of prayers for the dead from the Jewish Church, and those who attach importance to the argument from silence are entitled to point out that our Lord, who must have been entirely familiar with it, never condemned it. The silence of the English Church on this subject after 1552 was due to the monstrous and grossly material exaggerations of the later

¹ Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings, No. 32.

mediaeval days. What the Churchmen of those days were 'up against' was what may almost be called the commercialising of the unseen world through the mediaeval theories of purgatory and its accompaniments. But the best antidote to error is the discovery and the promulgation of any truth which lies behind it, and it is evident that our Mother Church—but for these exaggerations—would never have shut the door so completely, as in fact she did, on a practice which is natural, scriptural, and primitive.¹ The doctrinal pendulum, in this, as in other matters, has swung far enough, and it is now entirely reasonable that it should regain a truer balance. Nor is this all. As we have seen, the practice finds its inspiration in the fact that, living or 'dead,' we are one Family in God; 'all one Body we.' And the glory of this unbroken fellowship, this 'Communion of Saints,' is superbly set forth in the words which, taken partly from the revision of 1549, and adopted in the main in the Scottish Liturgy, are now added to the great intercession: 'And here we give Thee most high praise and hearty thanks for all Thy Saints, who have been the chosen vessels of Thy grace, and lights of the world in

¹ Cf. Bishop Cosin, who, speaking of this practice, says: 'Yet if there be nothing else, there is this at least in it, that hereby is declared the communion and conjunction which we have still one with another, as members of the same body whereof Christ is the head. . . . Whatsoever the effect and fruit of this prayer will be, though it be uncertain, yet hereby we show that charity which we owe to all those that are fellow-servants with us to Christ; and in this regard our prayer cannot be condemned, being neither impious nor unfit for them.'

their several generations ; and we pray, that rejoicing in their fellowship, and following their good examples, we may be partakers with them of Thy heavenly Kingdom.'

Three further points may be worth noting before we leave this prayer. Many will be glad that we no longer pray that the administration of justice may be 'indifferent,' but (as, of course, the word originally meant) 'impartial.' And that for 'curates' is substituted 'priests and deacons' ; moreover, the bishop of the diocese is to be mentioned by name,¹ thus emphasising what I think is a striking feature of these latter days, the growing sense of diocesan fellowship.

We next come to

THE PREPARATION.

This consists of the Exhortation—the third of the long exhortations in the old Prayer Book—with its exquisite combination of grave warning and tender encouragement. With the omission of certain phrases which are liable to misunderstanding² but whose solemn import is preserved in the preceding sentence, it is unaltered. Then follows the familiar Invitation, Confession, and Absolution, together with shorter forms permitted for use on other days. In each case the Absolution is followed by the Comfortable Words

¹ The omission of the Bishop's name was a sixteenth-century innovation, unknown in East and West.

² 'We eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's Body ; we kindle God's wrath against us ; we provoke him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death.'

and the Prayer of Humble Access ('We do not presume to come . . .').

This brings us to the central moment of the Service,

THE CONSECRATION.

Our Lord used bread and wine, and these He declared to be His Body and His Blood. There must therefore have been a moment when He deliberately set apart the elements for this purpose and invested them with this new meaning. Thus consecration is a primary action in the service. All leads up to this. All follows from it. Accordingly it was natural that the question soon began to be asked, How and at what moment is consecration effected? The early Church declined to answer that question precisely. Their emphasis, and the emphasis in our new service, is on the whole act and intention in obedience to Christ's command.¹ As time went on ideas began to crystallise and two streams of thought emerged. In the West, men tended to maintain that consecration was effected by the recital of the words² 'This is my Body, . . .' 'This is my Blood,' whereas in the East men rather thought of the agent in the action as being either the Word (in the sense of St. John i. 1) or, more frequently, the Holy Spirit. According to this thinking the consecration is the result of the Spirit's action. This is congenial to what the

¹ Srawley, *Early History of the Liturgy*, p. 227.

² But the words, of course, are addressed to the Father, and do not exclude the action of the Holy Spirit.

Bible tells us of the Spirit as the divine Agent in the creation of the universe,¹ in the Incarnation of our Lord,² in the regeneration of men,³ and in the work of the Church.⁴ Broadly speaking, the difference is that to the Latin mind consecration was effected by a formula ; to the Eastern mind by direct appeal to the life-giving and energising Spirit. Not that there was always a clear-cut division between East and West. Irenaeus, an early Western teacher, says that the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ on receiving 'the invocation of God.' He also speaks of the bread, over which thanks have been given, as the Body of Christ. In fact, he evidently regards the whole Prayer as the instrument of consecration.⁵ In both West and East, therefore, there seems to have been originally *some* kind of invocation of God's action, and some recital of the words of institution.

Later on the tradition hardened in both cases, and the underlying theories became more explicit. In the Prayer of Consecration in the old Prayer Book the Western, that is, the Roman tradition is found 'in the acutest form.'⁶ There is no invocation except in so far as it is involved in the 'Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee, . . .' but even that is not regarded as necessary, as is evident from the fact that when

¹ Gen. i. 2. ² St. Luke i. 35. ³ St. John iii. 5. ⁴ Acts i. 8.

⁵ Adv. Haer. IV. xviii. 5 ; V. ii. 2, 3. Quoted in *Twenty Consecration Prayers*, p. 16.

⁶ The phrase is Dr. Sparrow Simpson's.

more bread and wine are required the recital of the Words of Institution alone is deemed sufficient for their consecration. Further, the prayer stops abruptly at the memorial of the Lord's action at the Last Supper. No mention is made of the Resurrection or the Ascension, nor is there any ascription of praise or thanksgiving to the Father. It may be described as a minimum of what is necessary for consecration, and that on a strictly Roman theory.

In the new Consecration Prayer all these points are met and these defects remedied. In the first place the note of praise is struck at the outset : 'All glory be to Thee, Almighty God . . . ' The prayer then continues in the words with which we are familiar, including the Words of Institution. Then comes what is technically called the Anamnesis, the paragraph beginning 'Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father . . . ' Its purport is stated with complete simplicity and beauty in the well-known Communion Hymn of Dr. Bright—'And now, O Father, mindful of the love.' It is what St. Paul calls a 'proclamation'¹ of the Lord's death and passion to heaven and earth. It is, in so far as language can convey so great a mystery, an earthly reflection of Christ's presentation of Himself and His finished work in the unseen and heavenly sanctuary.² It is, in fact, doing in symbolic action what we say each time we use the phrase 'Through Jesus Christ our Lord,' for in so speaking we

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

² Hebrews vii. 24, 25 ; ix. 24.

plead His sacrifice as the only ground for our approach to the Father.

No one, probably, would have thought this aspect of the Eucharist unevangelical had it not been for the anxiety to escape from the grossly material and unscriptural notion that the sacrifice is literally *repeated* rather than symbolically and spiritually re-presented. It is significant to note that in the eighteenth century learned men like Bingham and Waterland, whose loyal Anglicanism—in the case of Waterland one might almost say whose Evangelical Anglicanism—cannot be questioned, commented adversely on the lack of this feature in the Canon of the old Prayer Book. Says Waterland :

In the Liturgy of 1549, there was a formal address to God for His propitious favour (a very ancient, eminent and solemn part of the Communion Service), in these words : We, Thy humble servants do celebrate, and make here before Thy divine Majesty, with these Thy holy gifts, the memorial, which Thy Son hath willed us to make, having in remembrance His blessed passion, mighty resurrection, etc. Why this part was struck out in the review I know not, unless it was owing to some scruple (which, however, was needless) about making the memorial before God, which at that time might appear to give some umbrage to the Popish sacrifice, among such as knew not how to distinguish.

Following this is the Invocation of the Holy Spirit. This at least calls attention to the fact that the whole transaction (if that word be allowed) takes place in the spiritual sphere. We do not

pray, and we do not believe, that the elements may be or are materially changed. No transubstantiation¹ in the popular sense is contemplated, but the attaching to them of a new significance—in a phrase of modern philosophy, new values. The piece of paper with the water-mark means nothing in itself, but when authorised and signed it *is* the five pounds it represents. The strip of red, white, and blue calico means nothing, but when the colours are arranged in a certain way and the whole becomes a flag it assumes a 'value' which may mean the difference between peace or war, between life and death.² It is the 'value' that matters, not the paper or the bunting. It is what it is, not because of its material, but because of its value.³ So it is in all the experience of life. And so it is in the holy mystery. The bread and the wine are bread and wine, but *their new and infinite 'value' in the context ordained by Christ is guaranteed by an act of God*, and that act, as in all the processes of creation and redemption, is effected by the Holy

¹ It is well to remember that in its origin the theory of Transubstantiation was an attempt to rescue the Church from a material theory of the consecration. 'Substance' was then held to mean what is essential in any object as opposed to its 'accidents,' that is, its material aspect.

² These similes are of course inadequate, but they serve to indicate the fact that, in our experience, spiritual values or potencies are attached to material things.

³ See Bishop of Manchester, *Christus Veritas*, chap. i., e.g. 'The most fundamental element in things is their value.' 'Value is not existence, but must receive, or come into, existence in order to be a part of reality; on the other hand, nothing is brought into existence except as a means to, or as a vehicle of, Value.'

Spirit. Therefore it is that we appeal to Him so to deal both with them and with us that they may be to us *what Christ said they are*—His Body and Blood. If 'value' is thus the spiritual quality which makes material things *real*, then we understand how in consequence of the Spirit's action, in answer to the Church's prayers, whereas the material is the bread and wine, the 'value' is the very Life of Christ¹; and that thereby, there ensues in a way peculiar to the Sacrament, a Real Presence,² independent of the worshipper's spiritual state, but available for his reception, and calling for the penitent and humble adoration which, if our Lord were here in the flesh, we should give Him.

§

The great prayer finishes with the Oblation, the Offering. The whole act is sacrificial for it is the memorial of the supreme sacrifice. We plead that sacrifice once offered, and eternally presented 'before the face of God,' but with this the sacrifice of Christ's mystical Body—the Church—is inseparably joined. And it is a manifest advantage in the new Canon that it connects the two in one prayer. With that re-presentation the Church's offering of itself goes on from age to age, and will so do until the

¹ The Elements, that is, are charged with a new meaning and a new power.

² 'I wonder whether some form like "Real Puissance" might not suggest what we are trying to express—namely, that the Eucharist is a means whereby the re-creative energy of Christ is brought to bear upon us. I want to give a dynamic meaning to the rite.'—Canon Streeter at the Farnham Conference (*Report*, p. 43).

redemption is fully completed and 'He hath put all enemies under His feet.' Therefore it is that at every Communion we 'offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable holy and living sacrifice' unto Him. This part of the prayer is verbatim in the old Prayer Book and it is now restored to the place from which it was removed in 1552.

This sacrificial aspect of the Holy Communion is thus embedded in its very institution, and it soon began to be explicit in the liturgies. In its earliest form it was eucharistic in character—a 'sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.' Even in the Roman Canon it is as the food of the faithful rather than as a propitiatory offering that the sacrifice is presented.¹ In this sense it was understood by a Roman Bishop (Watson) in the time of Queen Mary—'Thus doth the Church offer Christ her Head to God the Father, as a worthy sacrifice of praise and thanks'—as well as by a Reformer like Bishop Ridley—'As though our unbloody Sacrifice of the Church were any other than the Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, than a Commemoration, a showing-forth, and a Sacramental representation of that one only bloody Sacrifice offered up once for all.' It is this more primitive aspect—this true 'eucharist'—which is represented here.

With characteristic wisdom the Church of England joins with the early Church in refraining from any further definition of the mode of the

¹ Srawley, *The English Consecration Prayer*, p. 15.

Presence or the nature of the sacrifice. Human language can go no further and definition is as inappropriate as it would be in the case of the sheen of the starry sky or the purple glow of the sunset. We move here on heights of unspeakable mystery and splendour. And if there are twin peaks of dazzling brightness, one is the sacred Words of Institution, and the other the Invocation of His Spirit by Whom the consecration is consummated. The whole prayer is one and indivisible. It is the prayer-action of the Body, with the priest as its spokesman, from the Salutation and the *Sursum Corda* to the great Amen of the congregation at the close.¹

Thus the Alternative Canon combines both of the liturgical traditions. It is not wholly Western, and not wholly Eastern. It avoids the Romanism of our present Canon which concentrates the whole emphasis on the recital of the Words. Indeed we may go further and say that it continues and secures an English tradition (as it may already be called), for, apart from the old Prayer Book, every Canon of the Anglican Communion constructed since 1549 has followed these lines—the Liturgies of the Scottish Church, of the Church in the United States, of South Africa, and of the Diocese of Bombay.² It was this—a Canon on these lines—that some of the

¹ And this will be the moment for those ritual accompaniments of obeisance and adoration (where they are used).

² *An Order for the Administration of the Holy Communion*, sanctioned by the Episcopal Synod of India for experimental use in the Diocese of Bombay.

greatest Churchmen of the seventeenth century so earnestly desired. Archbishop Sharp of York (c. 1700) represents an august company which includes men like Bramhall, Jeremy Taylor, Andrewes, and Thorndike. Of Sharp his son and biographer writes :

Neither did he think the Liturgy so exactly reformed as to admit of no further amendment, had there been opportunity of attempting such a thing with safety. Though he admired the Communion office as it now stands, yet, in his own private judgment, he *preferred that in King Edward's first Service-book before it*, as a more proper office for the celebration of those mysteries.

An Invocation of the Holy Spirit was inserted in 1662¹ into the 'corrected copy' of the revision, and only at the last moment rejected.

It may therefore be confidently asserted that the 'new' Prayer of Consecration is more scriptural, more catholic, more evangelical, more primitive, and more English than even the prayer which for many of us is so full of the most sacred associations. To some *any* alternative seems sacrilegious. But if the Church of England has the right to order her own house ; if hers is not merely the right but the duty to provide the best liturgy for her sons ; if she feels a responsibility for the future and for the devotions of generations to come, then it would be craven indeed to miss this golden opportunity of producing a liturgy which, in my belief—in spite of the prognostications of pessimists—will do more to draw nearer together the

¹ By Cosin, or by the Bishops to whom he acted as secretary.

various groups within the Church than any action which has been possible since the Reformation.

It remains to notice that, in accordance with very ancient custom¹ the Lord's Prayer follows the Consecration, and that a large number of 'Proper Prefaces' are now provided whereby the great act of praise is connected with the special season or occasion, and further that the Preface which (apart from these) may be used on any Sunday concentrates attention on the high-priestly work of our Lord and the priestly status of His people.²

The optional use of the *Benedictus* in its proper place is provided for in the general rubrics of the service, and similarly the use of the *Agnus Dei* is allowable under the rubric in reference to hymns in the General Rubrics prefixed to Morning Prayer.

THE COMMUNION OF THE PRIEST AND PEOPLE calls for no comment except that special provision is made for avoiding undue delay in the communicating of a large number of people, and an Invitation is provided ('Draw near and receive . . .') which avoids the necessity of saying the Words of Administration to each communicant.

¹ It was thus used in Antioch in the fourth century; in Constantinople, and in North Africa in the fifth; in Rome in the sixth.

² 'Through Jesus Christ our Lord; for He is the true High Priest, who hath washed us from our sins, and hath made us to be a kingdom and priests unto Thee our God and Father. Therefore with angels . . .'

THE THANKSGIVING.

A welcome feature here is that the beautiful Thanksgiving 'Almighty and everliving God . . .,' which in the old service was only an alternative, seldom used, now becomes the first expression of worship after the great central action of the service—Consecration and Communion. It was no doubt the work of Cranmer, based partly on Hermann's 'Consultation,' but it has close affinities with the Sarum prayer. Provision is made for the insertion of Collects before the Blessing (as is frequently done), but the more suitable place, as suggested in the Rubric, is after the Intercession, for, to me at least (even in spite of the provision in the Ordinal), it is regrettable that the magnificent sequence of Thanksgiving, Gloria, and Blessing should ever be disturbed.

The whole service is grander and richer. The form of the Consecration is majestic and moving ; and if it is what I venture to claim for it, it should be the foundation of a new unity in devotion, and therefore in co-operation, between all the groups in our Church. Many prophets and righteous men—Newman, Keble, Pusey, as well as those already mentioned—have desired to see the things which we see, and have not seen them. Many others—Simeon, Venn, Ryle, Moule—if, like their successors in Convocation, they could have been freed, not from their love and

enthusiasm for truth, but from the prepossessions of the sixteenth century, would have rallied to this Catholic Evangelicalism, this Evangelical Catholicism, would have responded to this vocation which has come to our Mother Church to close our ranks and give ourselves without reserve to the tasks of the Gospel and the Kingdom.

CHAPTER V

THE GREAT MOMENTS OF LIFE

This Book it chalketh out before thine eyes
The man that seeks the everlasting Prize :
It shews you whence he comes, whither he goes,
What he leaves undone ; also what he does :
It also shews you how he runs and runs,
Till he unto the Gate of Glory comes.

JOHN BUNYAN.

MAN has undergone many ' changes and chances ' since he took his place on this planet. But through all the long centuries of his existence certain experiences have been constant ; constant at least since he began to feel after religion at all. He has had, has now, and will always have, his great moments. Apart from his birth, they are, first his solemn admission into the tribe or the society or the church, as the case may be ; then his initiation into the full responsibilities of life, physical and spiritual ; then his marriage ; then the time when disease attacks him, and he realises the insufficiency of his own resources ; and at the last, death. From time immemorial each of these great moments has had its appropriate religious ceremonies or accompaniments, and this, of course, is pre-eminently true in the case of the Church of Christ.

Few more searching tests of any Prayer Book could be made than to observe how it deals with these 'great moments'; what suggestions it makes; what ministrations it provides. And this is the more important in view of the fact that for large numbers of people these 'moments,' or some of them, provide well-nigh their only experience of corporate worship. Whereas no one but those who are, or who reckon themselves to be, loyal members of Christ's Society would venture to present themselves at the Holy Communion, there are thousands whose experience of the Prayer Book, old or new, is confined to the services at which family relationship or friendship secures their attendance, such as a Baptism, a Marriage, or a Funeral, and—it must be added—a Confirmation. There is therefore peculiar need for these services to be 'understandable,' services whose appeal is simple and direct.

I think this virtue may be claimed for the 'Occasional Services' in the new Book, to which I would now direct my readers' attention.

HOLY BAPTISM.

There are few if any of the revised Offices which will be more welcome to the parish priest. As I look back on groups of hardy mill-workers standing round the font at Bradford, or fathers and mothers from the mining districts of Bishop Auckland, not to mention toilers in South London, how moving the service might have been

if they had understood it—if, in fact, this revised version had been available. They did understand it in some degree, of course, but not without a good deal of preliminary explanation. Mercifully 'atmosphere' does not always depend on intelligibility.

The first point about the new Service is that it joins with the old one¹ in an endeavour to rescue the Service from the hole-and-corner usage which is too often its lot, and to bring it back into the open church 'when the most number of people come together.' Further, it insists on 'due notice'² being given to the parish priest, and the right to fix the time, thus securing for him opportunity to visit the home and prepare the parents for the solemnity. The parents may, if need be, act as godparents, provided there be one other, and godparents must at least be members of the Church.

Coming to the Service itself, it will be a relief to many to find (in the opening exhortation) that the child is no longer described as 'conceived and born in sin'—a phrase theologically explainable, but to the ordinary hearer embarrassing if not shocking—but as being 'from (his) birth prone to sin.' Many too will be glad to note that in the succeeding sentences the negative statement 'None can enter into the Kingdom of God except . . .' is preceded by the positive 'God

¹ In the slightly amended Second General Rubrick.

² The Fifth General Rubrick, instead of 'over-night or in the morning before' of the old Rubrick.

willeth all men to be saved, for God is love.' Here, as elsewhere, 'lively'—the old form of the adjective—becomes 'living.'

In the following prayer ('Almighty and everlasting God . . .') few will regret the disappearance of the references to Noah and his family and the Red Sea, and the concentration of emphasis on our Lord's Baptism, an event whose profound significance is often either neglected or misinterpreted.¹ The phrase 'delivered from Thy wrath' may be appropriate in some contexts, but it certainly is not here, and the new Book omits it.

In the next prayer ('Almighty and immortal God . . .') there is a welcome simplification of language in the closing phrases: 'that this infant may enjoy the everlasting benediction of Thy heavenly washing' becomes, 'that this infant, being washed from sin, may enjoy Thy heavenly benediction.' This simplification is maintained, together with a certain homeliness, by the substitution of 'you' for 'ye' in the exhortation which follows the Gospel, and also by its shortening and by the alteration of the archaic 'alloweth' into 'approveth.' Note, too, the moving words which immediately precede it: 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Doubt not therefore, but earnestly believe, that He loveth this child.' In the same way, in the prayer that follows ('Almighty and everlasting

¹ See the reference to it in a book in many ways most suggestive, *Life of Christ*, by J. Middleton Murry, ch. ii.

God . . .'), which, it is distinctly directed, is to be said by priest and people together, 'vouchsafed' has disappeared, and the simple words, 'For that Thou hast called us to the knowledge of Thy grace . . .' remain.

The first address to the godparents is shortened and simplified. In the question which follows, the phrase 'carnal desires' (not necessarily wrong in themselves) becomes 'sinful desires,'¹ and the Creed, instead of being interrogatory, is to be said by the priest and the godparents, preceded by the question, 'Dost thou, in the name of this child, profess the Christian faith?'

Approaching now the central act in the Service, the Blessing of the Water is in the form of all ancient consecrations. Introduced by the Salutation ('The Lord be with you . . .') and the *Sursum Corda*, it continues in the form with which we are familiar in the Holy Communion: 'It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty . . .' Even in the heart of this majestic thanksgiving there comes a simplification which makes us feel that the old Book, for all its beauty, was sometimes unnecessarily ponderous. Instead of 'Regard, we beseech Thee, the supplications of Thy congregation' we have 'Hear, we beseech Thee, the prayer of Thy people.' It is well to note that in the rubrics of both services the normal baptism is immersion, and that the usual substitute is only an allowed alternative, if only to secure that there

¹ As also, later in the Service, 'carnal desires' becomes 'evil desires.'

is a real 'pouring of water' on the child and not a mere sprinkling, which may be technically adequate, but is not worthy of the dignity of the Sacrament. The process of simplification is continued in the declaration which follows the baptism: 'Regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's Church' becomes 'born again, and received into the family of Christ's Church.' Obviously this reference to the divine Family is particularly appropriate at this moment.

The Thanksgiving ('We yield Thee hearty thanks . . .') is simplified and broken into two separate paragraphs. 'Incorporate him' becomes 'make him a member.' The difficult phrases—difficult at least to anyone who is not a careful student of St. Paul—about 'crucifying the old man' and 'abolishing the whole body of sin' (what does the labourer in the village church, or the squire, for that matter, make of them?) disappear, and we have the simple and meaningful words 'serving Thee here in newness of life.'

The homeliness of the Service reaches its climax in the beautiful Prayer for the Home which is added before the final address to the godparents, and in which (by implication) parents, nurses, nurserymaids, teachers, scout-leaders—'all who have the care' of the child—are remembered.

Thus we pass to the address to the godparents, arranged in a more pithy and pointed fashion, with a more explicit reference to Confirmation and subsequent admission to Holy Communion. Finally, instead of an abrupt ending at the close

of this address, which every sensible priest used to fill up at his discretion, there is the stately and moving Benediction from the Old Testament :
 ‘ The Lord bless you and keep you . . . ’

If there were no other reason for welcoming the revision of 1927, I should welcome it for the way in which, for tens of thousands of fathers and mothers, godparents, and all lovers of children, in the years to come, it will make the entrance of the child into the supreme Family Circle real, intelligible, and inspiring.

CONFIRMATION.

This Service does not differ from the existing Prayer Book to anything like the same extent as the Baptism Service, but it will be agreed, I think, that the alterations are improvements. To begin with, there is a new and much more edifying Preface, which gives (in part) the Scriptural authority for the Service, and displaces the very cold introduction in the old Book. This introduction was originally (and is obviously) a rubric, not an address, and was made into an address only in 1662. The Bishop’s question to the candidates is slightly simplified, and an alternative set of questions (equivalent to those in Holy Baptism) is provided, mainly for use in the case of candidates who have not been baptised in infancy. In this respect the form is parallel, though not in detail, to the one in the Scottish Office. The Lord’s Prayer now includes the Doxology, and

the Service ends with an extended Blessing ('Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage . . .') which is very striking. It is perhaps not wholly fanciful to compare this dispatch of the now pledged and equipped pilgrim on his earthly progress with his dispatch on his last solemn progress¹—'Go forth, upon thy journey from this world, O Christian soul . . .'

HOLY MATRIMONY.

The revision of this Service has attracted an amount of attention which is more than its due, but this is inevitable in an age which is obsessed with sex questions, and in which the whole nature and basis of marriage is called in question. The opening exhortation has been reworded in a way which (in its main outlines) has long been unofficially in use, but which states as plainly and unequivocally as before the primary purposes of marriage. Much irrelevant comment, as I think, both for and against, has been spent on the equalising of the vows. No question of the fundamental difference of the sexes is raised. On this St. Paul's doctrine is unshakable, and is corroborated by the obvious fact that the man is normally bread-winner and protector; that in the family as in outside affairs it is for him to take the initiative, and to shoulder the main burden of responsibility. Obviously when the Apostle applies his doctrine in particular cases,

¹ In the service for the Visitation of the Sick.

his advice has to be read in the context of the social customs and conventions of his day. In our day, however, the burden borne by the woman is often as great as her husband's, and domestically often greater, and it is right that the beautiful comradeship between man and woman as well as their spiritual equality should be reflected at this moment in the Service.¹ The alteration of 'worship' into 'honour' in 'with my body I thee honour' has caused a flutter in some literary dovecots, but the critics have not always noticed that this is not a concession to the degeneracy of our language in the twentieth century, but that it figured in the pre-Reformation Use of Hereford ; was originally agreed to by the Bishops and Puritans at the Hampton Court Conference of 1604 ; and again agreed to (though not finally adopted) by the Bishops in the Savoy Conference of 1662. No one with any experience of ordinary parochial life will regret this change, or the change of 'I endow' into 'I with thee share.' The specific direction as to the attitude both of the couple and of the congregation, before the prayer that follows, will put an end to all possible confusion at this point. The loss of Isaac and Rebecca,² as providing the ideal of matrimony, from the peculiarly solemn prayer that follows ('O eternal God . . .') is a great

¹ In cases where the man is selfish and unrestrained, abominable claims have been based upon 'obey,' as workers in slum districts know full well.

² Both of them saintly constellations of questionable magnitude.

gain. They only entered the Service in 1549. The further alternative Psalm—the few verses of Psalm 37—is a welcome relief when, as is not infrequently the case, Psalm 128 is thought to be too specific, and Psalm 67 too general, in character. Few will regret the departure of Isaac and Jacob, not to say that of Abraham and Sarah, from the first of the prayers ; for the substitution of ‘ our fathers ’ permits us to envisage saints of Christian times and indeed (where the memory is inspiring) ancestors of our own families.

The same is true of the over-elaborate exordium of the prayer (‘ O God, who by Thy mighty power . . .’) with its apparent endorsement of a curious tradition as to the creation of woman. Now the whole attention is concentrated on the fundamental basis of matrimony : ‘ O God, who hast taught us that it should never be lawful to put asunder those whom Thou by matrimony hast made one.’ An exquisite touch marks the final blessing, where, instead of the reference to Adam and Eve, we are reminded of the fatherhood of God (‘ Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .’). This same comment applies to the Collect for use where the marriage is followed by a celebration of the Holy Communion ; and this provision, together with Epistle and Gospel, constitutes a strong and very welcome encouragement for the couple to make their first united act of worship there and then.

THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.¹

There are not many points to notice in the 'Visitation,' but they include improvements which it may well be hoped may bring it back (in parts at least) into more frequent use. The 'Exhortation to Faith and Prayer' is a satisfying statement of the Christian view of sickness and healing. In the rubric following the creed there is a very suggestive mention both of a duty of the visiting priest—'The Minister shall instruct the sick person so to order his rule of prayer, for himself and others, that his days of sickness may be a time of faithful and loving intercourse with God'—and also of the secret of spiritual progress in illness. This is the first and the only mention of a 'rule of prayer' in the Prayer Book. It thereby suggests a habit which it may be hoped the new Book, with its great scope of intercessions, may do much to encourage.

The 'Exhortation to Repentance' is simplified and broken into shorter paragraphs. In the 'Act of Prayer and Blessing' the Psalm (121) and the prayer which follows (which may be accompanied by the laying on of hands²) lay more stress on health and life and relieve the

¹ It should be remembered that Canon LXIII provides that a 'Preacher' need not use the Office, but minister as he thinks fit.

² The first English Prayer Book (1549) provided for an Anointing by the Priest 'if the sicke person desyre to bee annoynted.' This, however, was not accepted by the bishops, mainly on the ground that modern investigations, both religious and scientific, have not gone far enough for such an official endorsement of what is undoubtedly a means of grace to many.

impression which certainly lies heavy upon the old Service—that the prospect of recovery (to say the least) is not very bright, and that the patient must prepare for the worst. The ‘Special Prayers’ are a valuable addition to the devotions of the sick-room—devotions which even in Church households are often strangely neglected—particularly the prayers For Healing, For a Sick Child, For a Convalescent, as also, of course, the Commendatory Prayers and the solemn dismissal of the soul into the Eternal World. Lovers of music will call to mind Elgar’s majestic interpretation of ‘*Profisciscere, anima Christiana de hoc mundo*’ in the ‘Dream of Gerontius.’ The marshalled list of prayers and passages ‘suitable for use with a sick person’ provides material for meditation and devotion which will be very precious, not only to the parish priest, but to many a sufferer during his time of weakness.

THE COMMUNION OF THE SICK.

It has been said with perfect truth that there is no Church in Christendom which makes such ample provision for the Communion of the Sick as the Church of England. In the forefront of that provision stands the celebration in the sick man’s room. This was the normal method for three centuries.¹ In 1549 it was provided that

¹ It should be remembered, however, that in Canon LXXI injunctions are given that this ‘use’ shall be strictly restricted to ‘times of necessity’ and for any person who is ‘either so impotent that he cannot go to church, or very dangerously sick.’

the Sacrament should be reserved at the open Communion and conveyed by the priest to the sick man after the service 'as soon as he conveniently may.' This, however, was immediately followed by a rubric providing for a celebration in the sick-room, and this last method ought always to be followed *when desired*. The rubric making provision for Communion by the reserved Sacrament in the new Book has suffered grievously in controversy by being torn from its context—the Communion of the Sick—and treated, so to speak, *in vacuo*. For whatever is allowed in those rubrics has one objective and one only—the provision of the Blessed Sacrament¹ for the member of Christ whose sickness prevents him being present at the celebration in church. And this provision is well-nigh as old as the Service itself. It will be remembered that, in one of the earliest accounts of the Holy Communion outside the New Testament,² we are told that after the consecration 'those whom we call deacons distribute to each of those present that they may participate in the Bread and Wine and Water that have been dedicated with thanksgiving; and they also carry thereof to the absent.' Evidently the idea in making this provision was to link up the absent with the present in the same fellowship of worship. Later on,

¹ The whole action is the Sacrament, but the phrase has now acquired a conventional use in this connection.

² Justin Martyr's, c. A.D. 150; see W. H. Freestone's *The Sacrament Reserved*, p. 17.

'it must be acknowledged that' in the first six centuries 'the evidence of a satisfactory kind for the official reservation of the Sacrament is extraordinarily scanty.'¹ On the other hand, 'there was no general dislike of reserving the Eucharist, provided that the elementary conditions of reverence and seemliness could be secured.'² The first definite order in regard to the reserved Eucharist appears in the enactments of a Council which met between the years 810-813 and enjoins Reservation :

That the priest shall always keep the sacrament in readiness, so that if any one be overtaken by sickness, or a child should be ill, he may give them communion immediately, and none may die unhouselled.³

From this time onwards the practice became still more common in England (as evidenced in the much-quoted Constitutions of Archbishop Peckham in 1281) and elsewhere, though from the first the Bishop's rights of regulation were secured.⁴ In England, we have already noted the provision in the Book of 1549, and it is noteworthy that it was not explicitly forbidden in 1552, in view of the strong opinions of men like Bucer and Peter Martyr, the foreign Reformers who were co-operating with Cranmer at that

¹ Freestone, *The Sacrament Reserved*, p. 106.

² *Ibid.*, p. 116.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30: 'Councils and synods carefully guarded the bishop's rights, and retained the offering of the Eucharist entirely under his control.'

time.¹ As a fact indeed, so far from being forbidden in all the Reformed Service Books it is expressly provided for in a Lutheran Church Order of 1540.² For the practice therefore of reserving the Holy Sacrament for the sick there is ancient and constant precedent. We may gather from a letter of Calvin concerning Rites in the English Church that it was at least a fairly common practice at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign ;³ it was pronounced allowable by Anthony Sparrow, Bishop first of Exeter and then of Norwich, in his 'Rationale,' published in 1657 ;⁴ Thorndike (one of the foremost theologians of that century) in 1670 advocates perpetual reservation.⁵ None the less the practice became more

¹ See Lockton, *Treatment of the Remains at the Eucharist after Holy Communion*, p. 251.

² Brightman, *The English Rite*, vol. i. p. xlii. The whole provision is worth quoting : ' If the sick person . . . be too ill to go to church, the priest, having on a surplice, and preceded by the sacristan with lantern and bell, shall carry the Sacrament to him directly from the altar at the time of communion, and communicate him at home ; and in a sudden emergency the priest shall resort to the church and there, after exhorting such as are present to pray for the sick, shall say the Lord's prayer at the altar and consecrate, and then carry the Sacrament to the sick as before : and in the house in both cases, after placing the Sacrament on a table covered with a linen cloth, he shall exhort the sick (in the form provided in the Alb.-Saxon Order) and recite Ps. XXV (and if there is time one or more of Pss. XX, XXIII, XXVII, XXXI, XLII), S. Jo. III 16 sqq., and a passage from S. Paul (e.g. from Rom. VIII, 10), followed by prayers, the Apostles' creed and the Lord's prayer ; the sick shall make his confession and be absolved ; and the priest shall communicate him in both kinds ; after which he shall recite Ps. CXVII or CIII and give the Aaronic blessing ; and if the sick desire it shall add Pss. XCI, CXVIII.'

³ Lockton, *The Remains at the Eucharist*, p. 256 ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 257 ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

intermittent, if it did not cease altogether, until the nineteenth century, when entirely new conditions supervened, and the whole system of sacramental provision had to be overhauled. This was due on the one hand to a deepening sense of devotion and in particular to a growing appreciation in all parts of the Church¹—in some almost a new perception—of the glory of the Holy Communion as ‘the Lord’s own service.’ It was also due to the revolution in the social and industrial conditions of the people, whereby new towns sprang into being, vast populations were herded together, and the ‘shortage of clergy’ began for the first time to make itself felt. These circumstances, devotional and social, increasing in insistence as the century progressed, combined to produce the demand which the reservation of the Sacrament is designed to meet. It is hardly necessary to remark that at this period of the twentieth century all these circumstances are more pressing than ever. There is a still deeper longing for that ‘most comfortable Sacrament’; populations are still increasing; and the shortage of clergy, though I believe the tide has turned, is

¹ It must never be forgotten that the Church revival in the early years of the nineteenth century was due to the Evangelicals. It was they who introduced early and more frequent celebrations, Evening Services, Week-day Services, and Hymns. Writing in 1836 of his church (Holy Trinity) at Cambridge, Simeon says, ‘Yesterday I partook of the Lord’s Supper in concert with a larger number than has been convened together in any church in Cambridge since the place existed upon earth. . . . So greatly,’ he quaintly adds, ‘has the Church of England been injured by myself and my associates’ (Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. i. p. 274 f.).

little less than desperate. The case for making provision for the Communion of the Sick with the reserved Sacrament is therefore overwhelming.

The rubric provides safeguards intended to restrict the use of this provision to its definitely specified purpose—the Communion of the Sick. Are those safeguards justified? Before answering that question there are certain observations which must be made. One is that much confusion has been caused in the controversies over these matters by the fact that until quite recent times the bishops had no policy. In this, as in other matters, experiments were made, and the bishops either looked the other way or came down heavily on the offender. Worse still, there was little corporate action by the bench because there was so little corporate thinking. One of the greatest boons of the present revision has been that the bishops have learned the art of attaining a common mind, and have been compelled to a corporate investigation of theological principles. Instead of concerning themselves merely with the administrative structure they have had to make time to examine the doctrinal foundations. For this reason the conclusions at which they have arrived carry far more weight and are far more deserving of the careful attention, both of Church and nation, than anything promulgated by bishops since the Reformation—it would probably be true to say since the English Church began its course. But this is a new phenomenon. The situation with which we have to deal arises out of a medley

of outworn rubrics, Privy Council decisions, judgments of individual bishops, varied administrations in different (sometimes adjacent) dioceses—a situation in which the new wine of sacramental life was of necessity bursting the old bottles of sixteenth-century enactments.

This is, of course, the strongest possible argument for the 'New Prayer Book.' It is also the strongest possible plea for patience with those who, bewildered by this welter of legal confusion, in many cases have, rightly or wrongly, made their own revision and who now are not overpleased at the prospect of rubrics and directions which have all the force which comes from a contemporary revision made by a contemporary (and practically united) bench of bishops. It would indeed be un-Christian to withhold sympathy from those 'extremists' whose motive has been, not a merely stupid anxiety to assimilate their practices to Roman ways, but a longing to lead their people thereby to a real apprehension of the spiritual, and more particularly to a deeper love for the Lord who died for them and who imparts His life to them in the Holy Sacrament. There are worse offences than to seek to kindle a love for our Lord, even by unauthorised methods, in an age, and in an England, grossly materialistic, honeycombed with class-selfishness, the motto of whose younger generation, according to an impartial critic,¹ is 'life without sacrifice.' There is therefore a

¹ Mr. Middleton Murry, 'The Future of Marriage,' *Spectator*, March 19, 1927.

singular lack of generosity about those persons of the opposite school who look upon the 'New Prayer Book' and its accompanying enactments as a kind of 'police measure,' and whose approval depends on the degree of confidence with which they may look forward to using it as a cudgel wherewith to compel their enemies to better ways.

The fact is that it is difficult for those of a subjective temperament, who are constitutionally distrustful of the tangible and the visible in religion, to understand the devotional temper of those to whom the sacramental approach to Christ is central in their spiritual experience. To them it is an unknown climate; the whole *ethos* of it is almost inconceivable. It is not that they do not value the Sacraments—that can never be said of the Evangelicals—but the whole emphasis of their spiritual experience lies in another direction, and they are suspicious of any 'sacramental system' which may even *seem* to come between the soul and God. This is only one instance of the kind of misunderstanding on which our controversies thrive. To those who do *not* use the 'system' with its emphasis on the objective and its accompaniments of ceremonial, it is obnoxious, as being outside their spiritual purview, for we are often suspicious of what we have never experienced. To those who *do* so use it, it is in thousands of cases the very gate of heaven. Of course the converse is also true, but just here and at this juncture we are called to make a real effort—it is a matter of mental and spiritual discipline—to rid ourselves

of these age-long prepossessions, and, liberated by the Spirit, to set our feet in a 'larger room.'

I return to my question: Are the restrictions in connection with this mode of the Communion of the Sick justified? To put the matter in another way, Ought the Holy Elements to be so used as to provide a focus for organised worship and devotion apart altogether from their ultimate destination in the room of the sick person? In my judgment the Church is right in refusing this authorisation. I will try to explain why, and of course I speak for no one but myself. To begin with the least important consideration. It would be startling indeed for the Church of England officially to approve a use of the Sacrament which is unknown in the Eastern Church, and which found no place in the Church of the West for at least ten centuries, and some would say longer.¹ But the modernness of a devotional experiment is no final argument against its use, or we should have to cease our Watch-night Services and our Three Hours' Devotion on Good Friday. What is far more serious is that this 'use' has no secure theological foundation. We live in what our fathers called the dispensation of the Spirit. There was an age—the age of the Old Testament—when God manifested Himself 'in many parts and in divers manners.' Tabernacle, shekinah, temple, prophetic word, even

¹ Freestone (*The Sacrament Reserved*, p. 257) quotes the Roman theologian, Father Thurston, as saying, 'In all the Christian literature of the first thousand years no one has apparently found a single clear and definite statement that any person visited a church in order to pray before the Body of Christ, which was kept on the altar.'

the burning bush, and pillar of cloud—all were His vehicles. Then came the supreme manifestation. ‘The Word was made flesh, and we beheld His glory.’ By His infinite condescension the Presence was definite, local, tangible, confined within all the human limitations of time and space. After the Resurrection the moment approached when ‘it was expedient for Him to go away,’ and the Presence was no longer mediated by His human Body, but by His Spirit. The day of Pentecost ‘was fully come,’ and the Age of the Spirit began. From that moment, though the ‘Breaking of the Bread’ was central in the life of the Church, Christ was perpetually present in His Body the Church and in each believer, *by the Spirit*. There was no need to search for, still less to create, a perpetual Presence of Jesus. *The Lord was there*, in the overflowing power of His Spirit, hourly filling the disciples with joy and peace, and ‘confirming the word with signs following.’ As a Roman Catholic writer so truly says of those exuberant believers :

Leur piété eucharistique s’était empreinte d’un réalisme plus pur, concentrée davantage autour de la véritable fin de l’auguste mystère, et, par là, moins exposée que de nos jours aux écarts indiscrets d’une dévotion mal guidée.¹

As we envisage that golden age, the idea of a permanent Presence of Christ provided, apart from the Action of the Eucharist, in a room or a

¹ *Revue Bénédictine*, quoted in the *Report of the Farnham Conference on Reservation*, p. 6.

church to which the faithful might resort, where they might find Him, is simply inconceivable. It is alien to the whole picture. It may be said that since that day both doctrine and experience have developed. But what kind of development is that in which the exhilarating, energising, always-available Presence of Christ has so receded into the mist that a use of the Sacrament hitherto unknown has to be brought in to fill the gap? I believe that here we touch the root of the matter. It is a significant fact that the *cultus* does not normally coincide with a strong realisation of the meaning of the Ascension and the Presence of Christ by the Holy Spirit.¹ This is true too of certain devotions. 'The Feast of Corpus Christi counts for much more than that of the Ascension in popular Roman practice.'² I believe that the neglect of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as mediating the Presence of Christ is the root cause of this 'development.' Men know that among the essential facts of Christianity is the presence, nay the companionship, of the living Christ, and to many God allows it to be a conscious experience. But it is not adequately taught.³ The heavenly argument of those final

¹ I see a statement to the same effect (in the April number of *Theology*) in regard to the warrior-saint, my friend, Frank Zanzibar. It is explained by Father Waggett, but it is significant.

² *Report of the Farnham Conference on Reservation*, p. 130.

³ 'We must, I fear, confess that with the great majority of church-people to-day the "Devotions" cannot injure belief in the indwelling of the Lord, or in the work of the Spirit, for the simple reason that neither of these beliefs is there to be injured.'—Professor Goudge at the Farnham Conference (*Report*, p. 102).

and infinitely precious discourses (St. John xiv.-xvii.) is too seldom unfolded in our pulpits. In some circles the 'Jesus of History' has almost supplanted the Christ of present experience. In others the Christ of present experience has receded into a distant heaven, in which He may best be approached through the intercession of His blessed Mother. Where the perpetual Presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit is thus left untaught and therefore unexperienced, the tendency is to seek it elsewhere, and on easier terms. This is the more tragic when we remember that the whole point of the blessed Sacrament is to demonstrate, in ways as mysterious as they are palpable and personal, His perpetual presence *in us*: 'that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us.' 'Christ in us' is the very objective of the Service, and that through the direct action which He enjoined: 'Take, eat . . . drink ye all of this.'¹

Have we authority to claim the Presence and leave out the action? For, for those (let us say) who assemble for 'Devotions' the action *is* left out. There is no thought or intention, as they look towards the Tabernacle, that *they* will 'eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup.' It seems to me that the whole record of our Lord's character and outlook is against such a 'use'—His emphasis on His unbroken communion with

¹ See the exposition of this point in the Dean of Wells' sermon on 'The Eucharist and its Interpretation to-day,' in *British Preachers* (Third Series), edited by Sir James Marchant.

the Father, His warnings about glossing the commandments of God with the traditions of men, His 'open-air religion,' and, most of all, His words about the nature and conditions of His perpetual Presence in the Church. Is it possible that He who made those revolutionary declarations about the *un-locality* of worship¹ could now design (through his Church) a local² manifestation of His Presence *apart from the Common Meal and the Eucharistic worship*—a veritable Christian Shekinah; and that this should be available in every consecrated building? Yet the fact that it was He also who pledged His most intimate Presence—His Body and His Blood—within the 'locality' of the Eucharist, makes us the more certain that *there, using it as He ordained it*, the Presence is ineffably real, awe-full, heart-searching, and life-giving. I go further, and I say that in my belief He unfolded to us precisely the truth that we need to learn,

¹ The immortal passage must be quoted :

'Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.

'Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know: for salvation is from the Jews.

'But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.

'God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers' (St. John iv. 21-24).

² Or what would be universally understood to be local, in spite of the fact that (as St. Thomas Aquinas and other theologians say) it is technically and truly not so.

and this in an incident of the first Easter Day—the scene at Emmaus.¹ There and then, as it seems to me, He showed the relation between His sacramental Presence and His spiritual Presence in an ‘action’ which (like all our Lord’s actions) was deliberate, and was intended for this object.² It was only three days since He had instituted the Eucharist, and it is the only occasion after the Resurrection (so far as is recorded) that He ‘took the Bread, and blessed it.’ I need not recall the scene, but what were those two disciples, and through them the whole of His company, with their minds full of the Upper Room, intended to learn?

First, that He is *really present* in every Eucharist. At any one of them, then and now, ‘our eyes’ might ‘be opened’ and He would be *there*, ‘Whom now beneath a veil we see.’ Secondly, that His sacramental Presence was not to be the method of His permanent Presence in the Church. ‘He vanished out of their sight.’ His *perpetual* Presence was to be mediated by the Holy Spirit not sacramentally, but spiritually. The third lesson is that in the blessed Sacrament He again and again (if I may reverently say so) comes out into the open, and there—as *nowhere else*—unveils Himself, and gives Himself, and unites Himself to His members. The two men rose from the table that evening knowing that from henceforth

¹ St. Luke xxiv. 13–35.

² The most inspired guide I and probably my readers know of here is old Dr. Latham. *The Risen Master*, p. 97 ff.

the 'breaking of the Bread' would bring, objectively and uniquely, His Presence. It was precisely there and then and by that means that He 'made Himself known.' They also knew that that Presence was independent of its visibility. The Sacrament was and is the outward and visible manifestation of what is always there. And I am glad that in the new Canon it is clear that His sacramental Presence, as also His spiritual Presence, is mediated by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, I see some light on this in the whole method of His appearances after the Resurrection. He was always with His own,¹ as, through the Spirit, He is with us. But *on occasion* then, as now in the holy Sacrament, He chose to become visible and tangible. But this visibility was not permanent. The Presence *in that mode* was withdrawn, to be given again the next day, or the next week—on the lake-side or on the mountain—according to His will. There were moments when the Presence was not palpable. There were other moments when He could say, 'Handle Me, and see . . .' So again and again 'Thou spreadst a table in my sight,' but this is not the mode of His permanent Presence. It is rather its pledge and guarantee, its 'effectual sign.' For it is through the Comforter that through every hour of every day Christ 'makes His abode in our hearts by faith.'

I feel it is an impertinence even to speak of,

¹ As is proved by His knowledge of St. Thomas' state of mind.

still more even to appear to dogmatise about, these holy mysteries. For this reason we are on safest ground when we leave the blessed Sacrament in its own divinely ordered context. But on such 'holy ground' we must be slow to condemn any, and quick to claim fellowship with all, whose one desire is to know the perpetual Presence of Jesus in their own lives, to find it in His own Sacrament, and (in some humble degree) to make it manifest to men. I repeat that in my view the case is made out for permanent Reservation. In principle there is no difference between intermittent and permanent Reservation. For if the Sacrament is reserved in the open Communion in the morning it may be hours before it is taken to the sick-room, and this at once involves all the conditions of permanent Reservation. More than that, there are some, perhaps many, to whom the knowledge that, in this church or in that, the holy Sacrament is (so to say) resting on its way to the house of sickness, brings help and inspiration in their prayers. I sympathise with them. It would be a foolish man and a foolish Church who would deny it, or them. But when it is a question of organised 'devotions' officially countenanced by the Church, then I say it is time to pause and think. For I submit that the considerations that I have urged—particularly with regard to the Lord's outlook and teaching, and the function of the Holy Spirit—should be felt just as strongly by Anglo-Catholics as by others. For have Catholics any other interest than to understand His mind ; to

teach religion as He taught it ; to use the Sacraments as He ordained them ; to proclaim His gospel ; and to live their lives in His perpetual Presence, as they experience it in the Holy Eucharist, and as it is made real to them by His Spirit? Is it too much to ask the opposing parties to think again, and indeed to pray again ; so that mindful of the ‘ meekness and gentleness ’ of Christ they may find at this stage of the Church’s pilgrimage new avenues of mutual approach? And will not one avenue at least be the discovery that their faith in, and their experience of, the Lord in His own Sacrament far transcends the differences of view wherewith they approach it? The revision recognises these differences. Let them, Book in hand, draw near ‘ in full assurance of faith.’ And, doing so, they will re-discover their unity in Him.

THE BURIAL SERVICE.

There remains the last of the great moments of life, the moment when, passing from life into Life, the Christian’s body is laid to rest. I suppose that few if any of our services have been subject to more private revision than this one, and this part of the present revision, I should venture to predict, will be widely welcomed. I will ask my readers’ attention to each section in turn.

The Introduction.—The additional sentences will

be gladly accepted, for in them further emphasis is laid on the love of God and the unbreakable union in Christ of all His members. It is regrettable that the revision of the famous sentence from the Book of Job ('I know that my Redeemer liveth . . .') has not been carried one step further, for the point of its conclusion is that 'though after my skin worms destroy this body,' yet in spirit—'*apart from my flesh* I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and no stranger,' *i.e.* not standing aloof in cold criticism, but as my Advocate and Friend.

The Service in Church.—Two new (but very ancient) antiphons are added—'Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord : and let light perpetual shine upon them,'¹ and the antiphon 'O Saviour of the world . . .' from the Visitation of the Sick. The provision of alternative Psalms and Lessons is a great gain, and there is also permission to omit that portion of the Lesson (1 Cor. xv) which deals with such difficult subjects as baptism for the dead. It is much to be hoped that this magnificent Lesson will not be too easily passed over in deference to the modern demand for brevity which is sometimes unduly obtrusive at funerals. It is permissible now, in accordance with one of the closing rubrics, to divide it into three parts, or to select three separate Lessons from those which are provided.

The Burial.—If an alternate Anthem is needed,

¹ *Requiescat in pace* is an inscription found in the Catacombs.

to take the place of the familiar 'Man that is born of a woman,' it would be difficult to improve upon the verses of Psalm 103 which have been chosen for this purpose. But I cannot suppress a suspicion that the demand for this is part of that subtle (and doubtless temporary) tendency to deprecate, and where possible excise, whatever savours of austerity and sternness in our religion and its expression. Certain expressions in the Anthem are, of course, open to criticism from a modern point of view, but it is not in this respect unique in the Prayer Book. Its solemn grandeur and its 'wailing prayerfulness,' not to mention its history,¹ should secure for it profound respect and continued use.

The alternative 'committal' is less confident in its tone, yet appropriate for use at any burial. It would be regrettable if, by his choice of one or the other form, the clergyman were thought to be pronouncing a verdict on the spiritual state of the deceased; but that does not alter the fact that there may be circumstances which will reasonably incline him to the one or the other as the case may be. It is fitting that this part of the Service should end with a Doxology ('Now unto the King eternal . . .').

The Prayers.—The versicles will enable the congregation to take a larger (vocal) part in the

¹ It was familiar in England as the Antiphon to *Nunc Dimittis* in the 3rd and 4th weeks of Lent in the Uses of Sarum, York, and Hereford. Its use in the Burial Service is peculiar to England. Part of the translation here comes from Coverdale's version of Luther's metrical 'Mitten wir.'

service, and the prayers which follow, both ancient and modern, are beautiful and appropriate. The prayer 'Almighty God with whom do live' has the Sarum beginning, but the greater part of it comes from the 1552 revision, and the prayer 'O merciful God . . .' is almost unaltered from 1549. Of the three modern prayers, the third is perhaps peculiarly moving with its recitation of the great sentences from the Creed.

In the Rubrics all necessary directions are given, and every contingency (*e.g.* a cremation) is met. For the first time the Church officially provides a Memorial Service (the Fifth Rubric) apart from a Funeral, and the Office for the BURIAL OF A CHILD is precisely what we should desire, and what, in some similar form, has often been used.

THE COMMINATION SERVICE.

The first part of this Service is modelled on the form of 1549, but the last part—from the *Miserere* onwards—was substantially in the Sarum Use, which also provided for a sermon. The present Alternative Form is taken from N.A. 84, *i.e.* the revision in its original form before it was submitted to the three Houses of Laity, Clergy, and Bishops. The 'cursings' are wisely revised and to the 'Amen' is very appropriately appended a Kyrie. The Exhortations which precede and which follow are also revised, and in the latter case considerably shortened. The form of

Commination Service recommended by the House of Clergy was not accepted by the Bishops, but it appears (with certain alterations and additions) in the 'Appendix' as 'AN EXHORTATION, whereby the People are put in Mind of the Law of Christ,' and is appointed for use (more particularly) in Advent and Lent. It now forms one of the most searching and soul-stirring services in the Book.

Thus, judged by the Services connected with the great moments of life, the revision is one which the Church may thankfully adopt. Indeed, a few years' use—I was almost saying a few months'—will make us wonder how we can have gone without enrichments so good and so much needed.

CHAPTER VI

THE APPENDIX

It is certain, and always has been, that if the English Church is really agreed in wanting anything, whatever, it will certainly get it: but if a party (the party, if you will, which expresses best the true Catholic spirit) tries to get its will, it certainly must fail.

BISHOP COLLINS, late of Gibraltar.

To the comments I have made on the Services which appertain to the 'Great Moments of Life' I add a few further remarks on the Appendix to the Book. It contains a further enrichment of our devotions. Prime, as its name implies, was the first of the 'Hours' of worship in the mediaeval system. In the simplification of our Services in 1549 it was absorbed in Mattins, and it is significant that it should regain its place in our Service Book in the twentieth century. Both Prime and Compline have long been familiar in colleges, religious houses, and in many parishes, but the inclusion of them in the Prayer Book will bring them to the notice of numbers of people who will be grateful for the provision of quite short Services wherewith to begin and end the day. Indeed I hope that both these Services may be used, or at least may furnish material for use, at those daily devotions known as Family Prayers.

Time was when Family Prayers was almost universal in all 'well-regulated households.' Now it has fallen into almost equally universal disuse, and this fact is at once a cause and a symptom of that casualness in religion which is so marked a feature of our time. The revised Prayer Book offers a golden opportunity for a new start in many directions, and not least, I hope, in this—a revival of the custom of Family Prayers. I do not say that the two Services must be used verbatim. For instance, I do not suggest that the Athanasian Creed is a suitable item for the 'breakfast-table' devotion which immediately precedes the father's departure to his daily work, or is the best prelude to those domestic duties to which the mother is anxious to proceed the moment he has gone. I do repeat that they provide all the necessary *material*, and that used with ordinary discretion they meet the demand—that *some* form for family prayer should be included in the Book—which was presented to the Bishops. Both Services, perhaps particularly Compline,¹ are singularly beautiful, and they should do much to encourage and extend those little groups of worshippers, in church or college or house or home, who desire to begin and to end the day with God.

§

The Devotion for use before the Celebration of the Holy Communion will prove helpful in the corporate preparation of the people for their great

¹ The Service of 'Completion.'

act of worship, and therefore in the creating of the right 'atmosphere' for their approach to the Holy Mysteries. It is not meant to interfere with any preliminary devotions which the priest and his assistants may desire to use (and which may be on similar lines to this one). Presumably a proper procedure would be for such devotions to be said in the vestry, whereas the devotion here provided would be said with the whole congregation when the ministers have taken their places in the sanctuary. For this reason—that it is a public devotion for the whole congregation—the Confession and Absolution are omitted, for in view of the fact that these follow almost immediately in the Service itself, there would obviously be a certain unreality in their inclusion here.

§

There follow 'The Collects, Epistles, and Gospels for the lesser Feasts and Fasts and other days which it is permitted to observe.' It must be remembered here that the final revision of the Calendar has yet to be made, and that this provision therefore is incomplete. It is, however, much more complete than any Calendar which has been in use since 1549, for it is the result of a careful revision made by the Convocations and embodied in the basis of the present revision—N.A. 84. This new departure will be a real boon to the large and increasing number of churches where there is a daily celebration of the Holy Communion, as also to the still larger

number in which the 'lesser Feasts' are observed. Some of these 'lesser Feasts' and their observance will be specially welcomed. It is right that All Souls' Day, long unofficially observed, should now find a place within the Book. There is an uplifting Missionary Collect for the Feast of the Name of Jesus, itself an equally welcome celebration, kept by most people perhaps most frequently by the singing of John Newton's famous hymn 'How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds.' It is good, too, that we should now be able specifically to commemorate our own national saints. The Collects provided for the Common of Saints—that is, for use on the commemoration of any saint not otherwise provided for—are on the whole worthy. Specially is this true of the Collect for the Commemoration of a Missionary, of a Matron, and of Any Saint. In the Collect for commemoration of a Matron there is a very moving mention of 'the shelter of a mother's love,' and 'the protection of a mother's prayer,' which adds one more touch to the homeliness of the new Book. Parochial Festivals are now properly provided for in the Feast of the Dedication or Consecration of a Church, and the Patronal Feast, and the same is true of the Harvest Festival, which has been left long enough out in the cold of exclusion from the Prayer Book.

§

Two new celebrations are now added in connection with the two great Sacraments of the

Gospel which, as the Catechism says, are 'generally necessary to salvation.' I earnestly hope that both may be widely used. The Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Baptism may well help to restore that solemn Sacrament to its proper place in the scheme of Church-life. It is inevitable that to the vast majority of Church-people this is the one great moment in life of which they have no remembrance. They know that it did take place, and that is all. But this commemoration will be a wholesome and much needed reminder of the wonderful privilege as well as of the grave responsibility of membership in God's Family, and should kindle in many a fresh determination to do their part in the world as 'limbs of Christ' and champions of His cause.

The Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion is equally welcome. That the Commemoration of the Sacrament of Love should give rise to even a breath of controversy is deplorable, and shows how far we have moved from the spiritual climate of its institution. There can be no doubt that in the Roman Communion the celebration of Corpus Christi is not free from superstition, and that to multitudes it is the supreme festival of the year. But the abuse even of a Festival of the Church is no valid reason for its disuse or its rejection, and it may well be hoped that all the schools of thought and devotion in the Church may co-operate to create a tradition of Anglican observance which shall be

sane, spiritual, and evangelistic in its influence. No special *day*, it may be added, is officially prescribed for either of these celebrations.

Last but not least, a Collect, Epistle, and Gospel are provided in connection with the Missionary Work of the Church Overseas, and the Appendix—and indeed the whole Book, apart from the ‘Exhortation’ on the final pages, which is placed there merely for convenience—ends most appropriately with a similar provision for a celebration whose special ‘objective’ is ‘the guidance of the Holy Spirit.’

It may be convenient to add a few words here in regard to the much-discussed Rubrics¹ as to the use in the parishes of the permissive alterations and additions.

In the first place, the Fifth Rubric, beginning with the words ‘At the discretion of the Minister . . .,’ regulates, wisely as I think, the *method* by which these alterations and additions may be used, and guards against any undue arbitrariness by which, owing to frequent and possibly minute substitutions of one form for the other, a congregation may be confused. All such substitutions, that is, are to be substitutions of *paragraphs*, not of single sentences or isolated phrases (except such as are provided for in the footnotes). Under this regulation, for example, it will be possible to use the new form in the earlier part of the Service of Holy Communion, including the Commandments (or their substitutes) and the Prayer for the

¹ P. 63 of the ‘Deposited Book.’

Church, but to retain the old form for the Prayer of Consecration, or vice versa. Or again, the new Introduction to the Service of Holy Matrimony might be used, but the old form of the Vows.

The Rubric which follows, beginning with the words 'But inasmuch as it is to be desired . . .,' emphasises the obvious necessity for mutual consideration and consultation between the parish priest and his Church Council in regard to the introduction, or the refusal, of any of the permissive alterations and additions. If difficulties arise between them, there is an appeal to the Bishop, who 'after such consultation as he shall think best, both with the Minister and with the people, shall make orders thereupon, and these orders shall be final.' The fundamental point here is 'the discretion of the Minister of the Parish,' as it always has been throughout the history of our Church. The people have an ample safeguard against mere arbitrariness and obstinacy in the appeal to the Bishop (who must consult with the people as well as with the minister), but ultimately the only authority which can constrain the minister to any course of action or inaction is the Bishop, and even he cannot compel the minister to use any of the permitted variations against his will.¹

These provisions, needless to say, have already been made into materials for lurid pictures of parochial strife. Given, however, a minister who is a true shepherd of his people, and a congregation

¹ See the Prayer Book Measure, Sect. 2 (ii) (c).

who with him have learned something of 'the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,' the situation, so far from opening new doors of difficulty, will be the occasion for a further experience of that fellowship.

It is worth remarking that the last Rubric on the same page (p. 63 of the Deposited Book) is severely limited by two conditions. First, it only comes into operation 'if any doubts or diversity arise'; and secondly, it only deals with 'the things contained in this book,' and has no reference to matters of ceremonial and the like, many of which are neither prescribed nor forbidden in the book. I have said elsewhere that there is much to be said for an English Directory of Ceremonial, but no attempt is made to provide it here. On the other hand, the attempt is made to ensure that any action which may be taken under the Rubric shall be taken, not by the individual Bishop, but by the corporate decision of the Archbishop and Bishops of the Province.

Apart from these Rubrics, the last item upon which I commented was a provision for a celebration whose special 'concern' should be the guidance of the Holy Spirit. With the prayer which comes from the Sarum Missal, and which was characteristically and beautifully touched up by Cranmer, I end my writing.

God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit ; Grant

us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort ; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

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